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The Birthe of Hercules

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON THE INFLUENCE OF PLAUTUS ON THE DRAMATIC LITERATURE OF ENGLAND IN THE

Sixteenth Century

By

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PREFACE

THE BIRTHE OF HERCULES, which is preserved in a single manuscript — British Museum MS., Add. 28722 — is now published for the first time. I have attempted to follow the manuscript copy accurately except in two particulars: the punctuation has been modernized, and contracted words have been written in full. Practically all cases of contracted words occurring in the play together with their expanded forms, are included in the following list:

y ^e —the, thee	contentm ^t —contentment
y ^t —that	commaundem ^t —commaundement
w ^t —what	serūntes—seruauntes
yo ^r —your	educacōn—educacion
hono ^r —honour	reputacōn—reputacion
w th —with	geñall—generall
w ^{ch} —which	mēchantes—merchantes
m ^r —master	p ^{te} — parte
m ^{res} —mistres	p ^{chance} —perchance
should ^r —shoulders	depture—departure
ord ^r —order	p ^{swade} —perswade
comēnd—commend	p ^{happs} —perhapps
comyt ^t ed—commytted	p ^{fytlie} —perfytlie

The spelling has been changed only to the extent of inserting the apostrophe in the expression “I’ faith”.

The beginning of a new folio of the manuscript has been indicated by a dagger. Original stage directions are preserved in parentheses; others are enclosed in brackets.

The present publication of the play is made possible by the courtesy of Professor F. I. Carpenter, of the University of Chicago, who, while studying in the British Museum, examined the manuscript, had a copy made, and ultimately gave it to the present writer to edit. Professor Carpenter has extended his courtesy to the reading of the proof of the play, and I am further under obligation to him, as well as to Professor A. H.

PREFACE

Tolman, of Chicago, for valuable suggestions in preparing the Introduction. But my chiefest debt of gratitude is due Professor John M. Manly, of Chicago. From the very beginning of my work his advice and criticism have been of inestimable value, and his unfailing kindness has ended only with the reading of the final proof sheets. I can not adequately express my grateful appreciation of his interest in my work.

MALCOLM W. WALLACE

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

A SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF CLASSICAL STUDY IN ENGLAND

The English universities of the Middle Ages knew very little about the classic Latin authors. Theology, rhetoric, philosophy, and canon and civil law were the subjects upon which their efforts were concentrated, to the almost absolute exclusion of the arts. Latin, to be sure, was the one language used in the universities, both in text-books and disquisitions, but it was the Latin of comparatively late Christian writers—a “barbarous jargon” which had traveled far from the standard of the time of Tully. And yet the authors of the flowering time of Roman literature were not entirely forgotten. As early as 1178 and 1180 we find English transcriptions of Terence¹—the work of Henry of Winchester, and Benedict, Abbot of Peterborough—and references to classic authors are frequent in the writings of the monks. Hugh Pudsey, Archdeacon of Winchester and Bishop of Durham, who died in 1195, bequeathed among other books *Tullius de Amicitia*.² In 1248 the library of Glastonbury Abbey was the richest in England, and though its total wealth consisted of only four hundred volumes³ it contained copies of Livy, Sallust, Seneca, Tully *de Senectute et Amicitia*, Vergil, Persius, and Claudian. But the monks did not study the classical authors seriously, nor appreciate their literary excellence, nor in any way attempt to make them models of prose composition. “A university education,” Mr. H. E. D. Blakiston tells us, “commenced at an early age with the acquisition of a working knowledge of Latin, the language of theology, law, and science, in the *Schools of Grammar*, where the text-

¹ Not translations, however, as Reinhardstoettner supposes them to have been; v. *Plautus und Terenz und ihr Einfluss auf die späteren Litteraturen*, I, p. 74.

² *Wills and Inventories* (Surtees Society, 1835), p. 4.

³ *Catalogi Veteres Librorum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelmensis* (Surtees Society, 1838).

books used were Terence and Priscian."¹ "Though some attempts were made to understand Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic writings, there was during this period nothing resembling the modern study of literature known as classical scholarship. The schoolmen wrote in a barbarous jargon of Latin."²

About the close of the thirteenth century the universities arrived at a condition of popularity and success which was at that time quite unprecedented. Although the statement of Archbishop Fitz-Ralph of Armagh made before the Consistory at Avignon in 1357 that in his days there had been as many as thirty thousand students at Oxford, can not be taken seriously, as Jusserand takes it,³ there is no doubt that at that institution alone there were about three thousand in attendance. But the decline of this external prosperity was rapid. When Archbishop Fitz-Ralph, in addressing the Consistory of Avignon, referred to the condition of Oxford, he declared that not more than six hundred students were in attendance at that time. The school program of the Middle Ages had worn itself out, and as yet there was no awakening to other possible sources of inspiration. The catalogue of Oriel College Library in 1375⁴ contains not a single reference to a Latin classic, the whole list being made up of works on Logic, Philosophy, Civil Law, Canon Law, Theology, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, etc. When toward the close of the fourteenth century, Winchester College and New College, Oxford, were founded by William de Wykeham, even though the purpose of the founder was to make possible full and free scholarship, and though "perfection is the note of his whole design," nevertheless the authors and subjects prescribed were those with which the schoolmen had long been familiar, and we find no approach whatever to real classical study.

During the fifteenth century, too, until near its close, scholarship was at an exceedingly low ebb. From the date of the Black Death till the Renaissance of learning—almost the beginning of the sixteenth century—the condition of the universities continued to grow worse. In the eyes of continental scholars, England was a realm hopelessly given

¹ *Social England*, ed. H. D. Traill, Vol. II, p. 65.

² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

³ *Le Théâtre en Angleterre*, p. 2.

⁴ *Collectanea*, I, C. R. L. Fletcher ed. (Ox. Hist. Soc., 1885).

over to the powers of ignorance and barbarism. Voigt says: *England war in den Augen des schönggeistigen Italieners eine kummerische Ecke der bewohnten Welt in welcher krasse Unwissenheit und sinnverwirrende Scholastik mit einander um den Preis der Verfinsterung kämpften.*¹ The gloom which enshrouds the first half of the century would be almost absolute were it not for the story of the life of the good Duke Humphrey of Gloucester—the only Maecenas of his age. He was the first Englishman to catch the real spirit of the Renaissance, and his enthusiasm for learning and literature displayed itself as well in the patronage of almost every man of letters of the time as in his untiring collection of manuscripts. The Rev. Henry Anstey, in his summary of Humphrey's contributions to the University of Oxford, says: "A very large proportion are theological works with a less number of mathematical, medical, and astronomical. Not a few copies of parts of Aristotle (translations it would appear), but of other classical authors only a few. We find, however, copies of Cicero, Seneca, Cato *moralizatus*, Pliny, Quintilian; one copy of Plato, one of Suetonius, one of Aeschines, one of Livy, one of Ovid; of Greek classics none besides Aeschines, unless we except the portions of Aristotle and the copy of Plato, and these were probably Latin translations. It is surprising to find that English chronicles are almost unrepresented (Capgrave and the Polychronicon being the only specimens), and that of the works of Petrarch and Boccaccio there are very numerous copies, and of Dante more than one."² Humphrey of Gloucester's influence in popularizing a knowledge of the classic writers can hardly be overestimated. The Renaissance in France preceded that in England by at least half a century, and translations of the classics into the French tongue had consequently been numerous. The Regent Duke of Bedford sent many of these translations to Humphrey, and in these French versions great numbers of Englishmen made their first acquaintance with Cicero and Vergil. Not that England was entirely lacking in copies of the great Latin authors in the original. Chaucer obviously knew Vergil and Ovid well and had some acquaintance with other classical writers. Works by Ovid,

¹ *Die Wiederbelebung des klassischen Alterthums, oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus*, Vol. II, p. 248.

² *Munimenta Academica* (2 vols.; Lond., 1863; The Rev. Henry Anstey ed.), Rolls Series, Vol. I, pp. lli-llil. The Catalogue is in Vol. II, pp. 758+.

Terence, Claudian, Juvenal, Lucian, Horace, Statius, Vergil, Tully, and Quintilian were owned by the monks of Durham in 1416,¹ but they were little read, and that only by a few *savants*. A comparatively large number of Englishmen knew French, however,² and besides it was an easy matter to secure English translations of these French versions. Before the year 1420, for example, Laurent Premierfait had translated into French the *De Senectute* and *De Amicitia* of Cicero; these were translated into English by William Botoner and John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, and formed one of the early issues of Caxton's press, being printed in 1481. From a French version Caxton also translated and printed the *Aeneid*, the modest preface of which did not save it from the scorn of Gawain Douglas, when, in 1513, he produced his own rendering, and declared Caxton's to bear a very slight resemblance to its original—"na mare like than the Devil and Sanct Austin."

It is easy, however, to overestimate the importance of these first signs of better things to come. The number of classics printed in England previous to 1540 is remarkably small.³ Not till 1521 were Greek characters used in any book printed in England. A catalogue of the library of the University of Cambridge about the year 1475 reveals "the entire absence of Greek authors, and the almost equally entire absence of all that in the eyes of the classical scholar gives its value to the Latin literature."⁴ The inventory of implements and books of the College of Auckland, upon the accession of William Thomeson to the deanery in 1498, contains no single classic Latin author. This was "the school in which many of the young nobility and gentry of the north of England were educated."⁵ Even more striking is the fact that in the reign of Henry VII. Caius Auberinus, an Italian, was employed by the University of Cambridge to compose the public orations and epistles, no one resident in the university being capable of performing this task. Auberinus was also employed to teach

¹ *Catalogi Veteres Librorum Ecclesiae Dunelmensis* (Surtees Society, 1838), pp. 108-9.

² For a statute (undated, but probably of the thirteenth century), providing that undergraduates of Oxford be taught to construe both in English and French, see *Munimenta Academica*, Vol. II, p. 438.

³ For the list, v. Warton, *History of English Poetry*, ed. Hazlitt, III, p. 114.

⁴ J. Bass Mullinger, *The University of Cambridge*, p. 323.

⁵ *Implementa Collegii de Auckland Episcopi*, p. 101; (*Wills and Inventories*, Surtees Society, 1835).

Terence in the public schools.¹ But the Humanistic movement in Italy was forcing itself more and more upon the attention of Englishmen, and pilgrimages to the fountainhead of knowledge had begun before the close of the century. One of the first students thus to seek abroad what his own land denied to him was John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, who, after a prolonged absence, returned to England, and at his death bequeathed to his old college, Balliol, over two hundred manuscripts which he had acquired. William Gray, Robert Flemmyng, John Phrea (or Free), and William Sellyng, all of whom afterwards received high ecclesiastical preferment in England, studied for some years in Italy, and made valuable manuscript collections, which on their return they presented to Oxford and Cambridge.

About 1475, Vitelli, the first Greek lecturer at Oxford, was appointed, and though he does not seem to have been in any sense a profound scholar nor to have made any particular impression upon the students of that institution, his appointment marks the beginning of a revolution in thought in England. He remained at Oxford till 1489, when he was called to the University of Paris. In the meantime one of his students, William Grocyn, had left Oxford in 1488 in order to spend some time under the learned Greeks settled in Italy. He returned in 1491, and though he received no official appointment, began at once to teach Greek. There can be little doubt that to him is due the first systematic teaching of that language in England. The question of priority is dealt with by Burrows in his *Memoir of William Grocyn*: "George Lily [in his *Virorum aliquot in Britannia . . . Elogia*] informs us that he (Grocyn) was 'the first to introduce the rudiments of the Greek and Latin tongues into Britain, and soon devoted himself more completely to those studies in Italy under Demetrius Chalcondyles and Politian.' Of course he means classical Latin. . . . There can be no reasonable doubt of this premiership."²

The struggles of the early Humanists with poverty, ignorance, and discouragements of all kinds are almost incredible, and monuments of the time, like the begging letters of Erasmus, speak only too eloquently of the conditions in the midst of which these pioneers of learning had to

¹ Warton, *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 332.

² *Collectanea*, II, p. 337. (Ox. Hist. Soc., Vol. XVI.)

struggle. Almost without exception they united a religious purpose to the more purely Humanistic one, and as a natural consequence the emphasis was placed on Greek rather than Latin. On it their enthusiasm was lavished, and positive direct information regarding the progress of the study of classical Latin during the first two decades of the sixteenth century is a little difficult to come at. But we know at least that the great Latin authors were once more established in the seats of honor in the schools and universities. In the statutes of Brasenose College, issued in 1517, provision is made for the teaching of all the chief Greek and Latin classics.¹ In the statutes of Corpus Christi, founded in the same year, provision is made for the appointment of a public lecturer in Greek, whose work is evidently considered of the highest importance. An outline of the work to be given by the professor of Latin is also furnished us, and this contains the names of all the greatest classical authors.² To extirpate barbarism—*barbariem a nostro alveario extirpet*—is one of the duties explicitly appointed to him. The establishment of this school—it was founded by Fox, Bishop of Winchester—with its high ideals of genuine classical scholarship is characterized by Warton as “the first conspicuous instance of an attempt to depart from the narrow plan of education which had hitherto been held sacred in the universities of England.”³

The development of higher education in England during the next twenty years is perhaps unparalleled. Not that all difficulties had been smoothed away. On the contrary the work of Erasmus, More, and the whole band of Humanists met with the most bitter opposition at every step.⁴ At Cambridge the most intense dislike of the innovations of “the Greeks” prevailed, while Oxford stood divided against itself. Erasmus—*Graeculus iste*—lectured on Greek grammar to empty benches. But intense as the opposition was, it betokened merely the natural reaction of the conservative elements. Luckily for the cause of education, Cardinal Wolsey threw himself heart and soul into the work of carrying out the ideas of the reformers. New colleges were built, chairs in Greek

¹ H. C. Maxwell Lyte, *History of the University of Oxford*, p. 407.

² *The History of Corpus Christi College*, Fowler, p. 38, (Ox. Hist. Soc., Vol. XXV).

³ *Hist. Eng. Poet.*, Vol. IV, p. 2.

⁴ On this phase of the subject see the opening pages of Warton's *Hist. Eng. Poet.*, Vol. IV.

and Latin were established and heavily endowed in older institutions, and the mediaeval philosophy and logic were gradually but surely eliminated from the curricula. Nor was the royal influence less potent. Henry had no lasting, clear-sighted concern for the interests of the new learning, but at least spasmodically he gave it material assistance. In 1524 he called Robert Wakefield, the celebrated linguist, who was then lecturing at Tübingen, to give courses at Cambridge, deploring at the same time the total ignorance of both the clergy and the universities in the ancient languages. In 1535, Richard Layton and John ap Rice were sent by Cromwell to inquire into the condition of things at Oxford. They were invested with considerable authority, and they exercised it for the benefit of the new classical study. "We have sett Duncce [Duns Scotus] in Bocardo," Layton wrote to Cromwell, "and have utterly banished hym Oxforde for ever with all his blinde glosses, and is nowe made a comon servant to evere man, faste nailed up upon postes in all comon howses of easement: id quod oculis meis vidi."¹

Nothing illustrates more clearly the essentially popular character of the movement we are considering than the establishment of grammar schools throughout the country. From 1503 till the time of the Reformation more of these schools were established and endowed than there had been during the preceding three hundred years.² The most noted was that founded by Colet in St. Paul's churchyard, of which Lily was formally appointed head-master in 1512, though he had probably been teaching its students for some years before this date. That the general standard set up by Colet approached the high mark of excellence which the Humanists set before themselves in the matter of university reforms, is seen by a glance at the statutes of the school: "As touching in this scole what shall be taught of the maisters and learned of the scolers it passeth my witte to devyse and determyne in particular, but in general to speake and sume what to saye my mynde I would they were taught always in good literature bothe Laten and Greke, and good autors such as have the verrye Romaine eloquence joyned with wisdom. . . ." And again: "All Barbary, all corruption, all Laten adulterate which ignorant

¹ See article "Layton" (Richard) in *Dic. Nat. Biog.*

² Warton, *Op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 1.

blinde foles brought into this worlde and with the same hath dystained and poysonyd the olde laten speche and the veraye Romayne Tongue which in the tyme of Tully and Salust, and Virgill, and Terence, was usid, whiche also Sainte Jerome and Sainte Ambrose and Saint Austen and many holy Doctors lernid in theyre tymes. I saye that fylthines and all suche abusion whiche the later blynde worlde brought in whiche more rather may be called blotterature than Litterature, I utterly abannyshe and exclude out of this Scole, and charge the maisters that they teache alweye that is beste, and instruct the Children in Greke and redynge Laten in redynge unto them suche autors that hathe with wisdomes joyned the pure chaste Eloquence."¹

Lily was one of the most distinguished scholars of the period, being unsurpassed at this time unless possibly by Grocyn and Colet. He had studied at Rhodes, and later in Italy under Sulpitius and Pomponius Laetus, and at length, a finished classical scholar, he returned to England to become the first teacher of Greek in an English grammar school. The institution soon became famous under his direction, and at his death in 1522 he was succeeded by his son-in-law, John Rightwise, author of the tragedy of "Dido," who had been second master since 1517. By their enthusiasm and entire devotion to the cause of learning many men of less solid scholarship than Lily became famous as teachers of the classical languages in others of these early foundations, such as Winchester, Eton, and Wolsey's school at Ipswich, and a generous rivalry soon contributed to a dissemination among all classes of a knowledge of the newly found treasures of literature.

If the success which had come to crown the efforts of the educational reformers had been sudden and almost spectacular in character, its decline was no less swift and striking. The causes usually assigned to this downfall are three. The first temptation for scholars to withdraw their attention from the legitimate subjects of scholarship arose in connection with the king's suit for divorce. The opinion of the universities was demanded on the question, and this furnished a splendid opportunity for those who had been masters of the old system of logic and casuistry, and who had not yet been entirely won

¹ *Statutes of St. Paul's School. V. Knight's Life of Colet, pp. 364-65.*

from their former idols, to return and revel in the exercises for which they had been trained. Canon and civil law, which had formerly occupied so important a place in school curricula, were again called into requisition with all their opportunities for metaphysical hair-splitting. During the protracted course of the divorce suit many scholars devoted the greater part of their time to such study.

The effect on learning of Henry's matrimonial difficulties was unimportant, however, compared to that consequent upon the suppression of the monasteries. Many years previous to the issue of the final edict, the process of gradual confiscation had begun, Wolsey having successfully manipulated a scheme whereby the revenue of individual houses was diverted to the cause of secular education. There can be no doubt that these first confiscations were, on the whole, of a highly beneficent character. That the monasteries were too often the centres of idleness, ignorance, and immorality there can be no denying.¹ But they had been for many years the great centres of popular education, and if the instruction they gave left much to be desired, it was infinitely preferable to the total darkness in which many districts were plunged upon their suppression. A universal wail went up from all sections of the country, in which were mingled commiseration for the wretchedness which had come upon monks and nuns, and sorrow for the extinguishing of the only light which shone in upon the dense ignorance of the provinces. Fuller tells us: "There was now (1546) a general decay of students, no college having more scholars therein than hardly those of the foundation; no volunteers at all, and only persons pressed, in a manner, by their places to reside. Indeed on the fall of abbeys fell the heart of all scholars fearing the ruin of learning."² Naturally the blow fell with much greater force on the lower classes, for among those in high life³ the custom of engaging tutors to attend to the education of their children had become common.

The last and greatest of the causes for the decay of learning was really an outgrowth of the Renaissance itself, viz.,

¹ See for example the "*Visitation of the Diocese of Norwich*," 1492-1532; *passim* (Camden Society, 1888).

² *History of the University of Cambridge*, p. 173.

³ An interesting account of what this instruction consisted in, is given in some letters addressed to Cromwell by the tutor of his son. V. Craik, *Literature and Learning in England*, Vol. II, p. 209 ff.

the Reformation. When once the new movement had laid its all-powerful grasp on the nation it seemed to engross the thoughts of men to the exclusion of all other interests. Many scholars turned aside from purely literary researches to give their whole attention to theology and polemics, to the study of church history and the origins of Christianity. This was followed by a growing contempt for all secular knowledge. Academic degrees were contemned as being pernicious, and not in accordance with the word of God. Exhibitions and scholarships were cut down, and somewhat later Oxford was stripped by religious zealots of the magnificent collection of manuscripts which had been presented by Humphrey of Gloucester. Under Sir Thomas Smith and Sir John Cheke—their knighthood dates from a period after they had severed their connection with the university—Cambridge had become famous for Greek scholarship throughout Europe. When they had taken their departure, however, the reputation of this university sank quickly and hopelessly also.

On the accession of Edward VI. the condition of affairs became speedily worse. The rapacity of the courtiers robbed the universities of their endowments, so that scholarships were almost unknown, and the clergy were likewise robbed of their revenues, learning becoming more and more generally discredited. Latimer's lament over the decay of divinity went forth accompanied by Roger Ascham's lament over the decline of true scholarship and the ruin of grammar schools throughout England, coupled with his bitter prediction of the extinction of the universities in the near future.

Ascham's prediction did not receive literal fulfilment, but it was at least true that the universities did not really rally before the end of the century. This fact is likely to be forgotten when one thinks of the attention which was given to Latin and Greek by Lady Jane Grey, Queen Elizabeth and the court circle, not to mention others of the large number of brilliant women who distinguished themselves as classical students. The truth is, however, that this enthusiasm was in part at least a fad, and its influence not of a kind to affect popular education in the least, nor even to inspire the universities. Strype's *Annals and Ecclesiastical Memoirs* bristle with reiterations of the statement that the ancient glory of the universities had departed. In 1550 he tells us that "the universities

were but in a sorry declining condition, occasioned by the discouragements given to learning, the laity laying hold of the spiritual preferments so much as they did, designed and appointed for the reward and maintenance of the clergy."¹ In 1553 Latimer estimated that there were then ten thousand students less in England than there were twenty years before. Speaking of Richard Cheney, B.D., consecrated Bishop of Gloucester, April 19, 1562, Strype says: "He seemed to be well instructed in Greek literature, which was rare in those days."² He reports in these terms a speech made before the queen by Thomas Williams, speaker of the Lower House, on January 15, 1562: "He took notice of the want of schools; that at least an hundred were wanting in England, which before this time had been [being destroyed I suppose he meant] by the dissolution of monasteries and religious houses, fraternities and colleges."³ Strype also speaks of the decay of learning in general, especially in the universities, and mentions the fact that the great market towns were without schools or preachers. He quotes from James Pilkington, Bishop of Winchester, regarding the small number of scholars in the universities and their general wretched condition.⁴ In 1568 the queen encouraged the universities to study divinity, "which study had decayed owing to laymen having swallowed up ecclesiastical places and preferments."⁵ Gabriel Harvey frequently rails against the condition of the universities and the character of the students in his day. In a letter⁶ to Dr. Young, master of Pembroke Hall, and of date November 1, 1573, he says: "Na I think verrely if sum miht have there wils thai shuld have nether Greek nor Latin nor ani thing els red unto them. . . . Thus within a few years al shuld be turnid topset tirvi; and Pembrook Hal shuld set forth as mani good schollars as it hath now good students; *and that is as few, I beleev as ever you knew in the hows sins you were first fellow.*" It is only fair to add that he goes on to speak of the "great and notable scholars" which the Hall had produced "within this twenti years or there about."

¹ *Ecclesiastical Memoirs*, Pt. I, p. 404.

² *Annals*, Vol. I, p. 418.

³ *Annals*, Vol. I, p. 437.

⁴ *Annals*, Vol. I, p. 537.

⁵ *Annals*, Vol. IV, p. 263.

⁶ *Letter Book of Gabriel Harvey*, pp. 52-53 (Camden Society, 1884).

Until the end of the century political domination rendered futile all strivings toward reform on the part of the universities. The influence exercised by Leicester, who, from 1565 to 1588, was Chancellor of Oxford, was far from beneficent—"an influence," Huber terms it, "shackled by no law, no right, no moral consideration, but determined simply by his own personal interests. . . . As soon as he recognized in the university a useful tool he used it unscrupulously."¹ But whatever causes conspired to produce such unfortunate effects, their dominion was absolute, and prevailed till the beginning of the next century. Another proof of the low esteem in which Englishmen held their own educational institutions is seen in the exodus of students at this period to the continental universities. To such proportions had this evil grown that it was at length made the subject of legislation. In a letter dated December 15, 1580, written by the lords and others of the council to William Chaderton, Lord Bishop of Chester, attention is called to the great harm resulting to her Majesty's dominions from this practice, i.e., "the education of great number of yonge gentlemen and other her subjects in the partes beyond the sea's,"² and stringent measures for its future prevention or diminution were adopted. The justifiable pride which England had felt in her national seats of learning in the days of Grocyn and Colet, of Lily and Linacre, of More and Erasmus, and later when Cheke and Smith had made Cambridge famous in the world of scholars, seemed to have become a tradition from the distant past, and contemporary evidence is practically unanimous to the effect that an ardent spirit of study and research was entirely lacking in the universities even down to the close of the century.

The conclusion to which the foregoing paragraphs point is of interest in a study of the Renaissance movement in England. Briefly summed up, the situation is as follows: After a short period of almost phenomenal development the English universities and secondary schools entered upon a period of decline, dating from the decade subsequent to the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century. By the middle of the century the universities were in "a sorry declining condition,"

¹ Huber: *Die Englische Universitäten*. Translated by Francis W. Newman, Vol. I, p. 351. On the general subject of the decline of the universities till the end of the century, see Vol. I, Chap. VIII, *passim*.

² *Desiderata Curiosa*—Peck, Lib. III, 99.

and it was only toward the close of Elizabeth's reign that the new learning firmly reëstablished itself. Curiously enough this pause in the progress of scholarship and education coincides chronologically—at least till the beginning of the last quarter of the century—with a pause in the literary development which had been marked by the work of Wyatt and Surrey. From the time when they ceased to write until Lyly began to produce his plays, we have no great achievement in literature with the exception of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, for the principal contributors to *Tottel's Miscellany* had been long dead when it was published in 1557, and the plays which belong to this period are of much greater interest historically than as pure literature. In other words, the Renaissance of learning and literature in England during the early sixteenth century died out, and it was a new movement, another renaissance, and due at least in part to other causes, which was rendered illustrious by such names as those of the university wits, of Jonson, and of Shakspeare. In the earlier literary movement the influence of Italian literature dominated; in the later movement it was still potent though by no means supreme.

CHAPTER II

THE REVIVAL OF THE STUDY OF PLAUTUS

When we consider the history of the study of Plautus through the Middle Ages side by side with that of the study of Terence, a rather peculiar phenomenon is presented. The latter early became one of the names most frequently met with in school curricula; at no time during the centuries of comparative darkness was he entirely forgotten. The purity and propriety of his language made him a favorite in the schools; and when from a moral point of view his works were objectionable, attempts were made to obviate this difficulty, e.g., the *rifacimenti* of Hrotsvitha, the nun of Gandersheim, in the tenth century. Terence won fame for another reason also: he was prized as a great teacher of mankind, was ranked with the philosophers, and his sententious bits of wisdom were as often quoted in the Middle Ages as were the epigrams of Pope by a later generation. It was for this reason that Chasles declares Terence to have been so popular in France during the sixteenth century. "*Il se mêle aux recherches de l'érudition un goût qui appartient à l'adolescence des littératures, le goût de sentences.*"¹ In England we have already noted the transcriptions of Henry of Winchester, and Benedict of Peterborough; Madden tells us that "no classic author is oftener quoted by monkish writers, and in the British Museum alone there are above thirty manuscript copies written between the tenth and fifteenth centuries."²

Very different was the fate of Plautus. In the third century a comedy was written, called the *Querolus*—a sort of continuation of the *Aulularia*,—the son of Euclio, the miser, being the central character. Throughout the Middle Ages this work was very generally ascribed to Plautus, and in this connection his name was more widely known than in any other. In the beginning of the fifth century his works seem to have

¹ *La Comédie en France au XVI^{me} Siècle*, p. 10. Compare the English books of selections compiled by Udall and others somewhat later.

² Warton, *Hist. Eng. Poet.*, II, p. 217.

been still generally read. Even Jerome tells us how he would turn to Plautus after spending long nights in bemoaning the wickedness of his life. But the difficulty of the language prevented his comedies from obtaining a firm foothold in the schools, and in the course of time the last twelve plays were lost. About the close of the tenth century Ratherius mentions the *Persa*, and from that time till the Renaissance there is no evidence of anyone having read these last dramas. The first sign of a renewal of interest is to be found in two plays, written by Vital de Blois, not later than the middle of the twelfth century. The first of these was the *Aulularia*—an adaptation of the *Querolus*, which latter play he supposed to be by Plautus; the second, which treats the *Amphitryon* story, was the *Geta*, the immediate source of which, however, was probably some drama or story of the early centuries of the Christian era.¹ Petrarch and the band of Renaissance scholars under whom the great awakening movement began in Italy were enthusiastic students of Plautus, though as yet only the first eight comedies were accessible. But in 1427 Nikolaus Cusanus brought from Germany to Rome a manuscript which had long been coveted by the Italian Humanists, and which contained the twelve long-lost comedies of Plautus. This event—one of the most important and remarkable in the whole history of the Humanistic movement—gave a strong impulse to classical study, especially to that of Plautus. Study and text-criticism of his works became general throughout Italy, and scholars earned reputations for their knowledge of Plautus alone, and for their ingenuity in supplying the numerous and extensive *lacunae* in the plays. Particularly famous in this connection were Codrus (1446-1500), who supplied the missing scenes of the *Aulularia*, and Hermolaus Barbarus (1454-1494), who performed a similar service for the *Amphitruo*.² The re-staging of the Roman comedies proceeded much more slowly. The Middle Ages had not only allowed the ancient dramatic works to fall into oblivion; they had forgotten the very nature of a drama, and “tragedy” and “comedy” had come to mean two great divisions of literature rather than particular species. The general conception of comedy is illus-

¹ V. Cloetta: *Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte des Mittelalters*, pp. 68-71 ff.

² On this whole subject of Plautus revival in Italy v. Creizenach, *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, I, 572 ff.

trated by Dante's definition prefixed to the *Divina Commedia*. Regarding the putting of plays on the boards the most absurd notions prevailed.¹ But the revival of interest in literary study of the plays necessarily carried with it a revival of interest in scenic representations. To Pomponio Leto, a citizen of Rome, is generally ascribed the honor of having first in his day brought upon the stage the works of Plautus and Terence, as well as of modern writers. In 1484 a historical drama was presented in the Vatican in the presence of the pope and the cardinals, and we hear of a representation of the *Aulularia* on the Quirinal about the same time. Nor was the enthusiasm confined to Rome. At Ferrara, in 1486, a translation of the *Menaechmi* was presented at the royal palace, Duke Ercole I. being himself the author of the translation. In 1487 and 1491 similar representations of the *Amphitruo* were given. But in spite of this enthusiasm Rome contained no permanent theatre in the year 1492.²

In England the revival of interest in the works of the Latin dramatists began, of course, at a much later date. One of the earliest references to Plautus in the works of an English author is found in Skelton, who from his youth had been a close student of the classics and of current French literature. In 1490, Caxton, in the preface to *The Boke of Eneydos compyled by Vyrgyle*, says in reference to Skelton: "He hath late translated the epystlys of Tulle and the boke of dyadorus syculus, and diverse other werkes oute of latyn in to Englysshe, not in rude and olde langage but in polysshed and ornate termes craftely, as he that hath redde vyrgyle, ovyde, tullye, and all the other noble poetes and oratours, to me unknowen."³ In his *Speke, Parrot* Skelton is describing the change that has recently come over the schools:

In Accademia Parrot dare no probleme kepe.
For *Græce fari* so occupyeth the chayre,
That *Latinum fari* may fall to rest and slepe,
And *Syllogisari* was drowned at Sturbrydge fayre,

but a few lines farther on he tells us:

Plauti in his comedies a chyld shall now reherse.⁴

Skelton has one other reference to Plautus, viz. in his

¹ V. Cloetta, *Op. cit.*, I, pp. 2, 3, 4 *et passim*, and Creizenach in his introduction.

² Klein, *Geschichte des Dramas*, Bd. IV, pp. 248-251.

³ Quoted by Dyce in his edition of *The Poetical Works of Skelton*, Vol. I, xi.

⁴ Dyce's edition, Vol. II, l. 181.

Garlande of Laurell. It occurs in a list of the "poetis laureat of many dyverse nacyons" amongst whom he mentions

Mayster Terence, the famous comicar,
With Plautus that wrote full many a comody.¹

Of neither of these poems has the date been accurately determined, but the appearance of both was probably anterior to 1520. More's *Utopia* (1515-1516) contains a reference to the staging of Plautus's plays.² That Plautus had already become one of the chief Latin text-books in the universities we know from several sources. The statutes of Brasenose College issued in June, 1517, include both Plautus and Terence in the list of Latin classics for the teaching of which provision is made.³ The statutes of Corpus Christi College, founded in the same year, make similar provision for the teaching of Plautus and Terence.⁴ In 1520 Linacre made a catalogue of the books in the library of his friend Grocyn, who had died in the preceding year, and in this list we find the entry "Comedie Plauti, p. in pr."⁵ Another list, written on a small piece of paper, and in a different hand, is also preserved, which Burrows surmises is that of books lent to different people or colleges. On this list the name of Plautus stands first.⁶ In this same year—1520—an event took place which puts it beyond question that Plautus had been well known to English students for some time, viz., the staging of one of his plays with great splendor, as part of the entertainment of the French hostages then in England. It was probably given in Latin, but unfortunately very little information has come down to us regarding the event. Holinshed thus describes it: "The king used familiarlie these four hostages and on the seventh daie of maie prepared a disguising, and caused his great chamber at Greenwich to be staged, and great lights to be set on pillors that were gilt, with basons gilt, and the roofe was covered with blue sattin, set full of presses of fine gold and flowers. . . . Into this came the king, and the queene, with the hostages, and there was a goodlie comedie of Plautus plaied."⁷ This is the only

¹ Dyce's edition, Vol. I, ll. 353-54.

² V. p. 25 of the present study.

³ H. C. Maxwell Lyte, *History of the University of Oxford*, p. 407.

⁴ Fowler, *The History of Corpus Christi Coll.*, p. 39 (Ox. Hist. Soc., **xxv**).

⁵ Burrows, *Collectanea*, II, Pt. V, p. 320 (Ox. Hist. Soc., **xvi**).

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 324.

⁷ Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Vol. III, p. 635.

account I have found of the staging of a play of Plautus during the first half of the century,¹ though we may pretty certainly conclude that such representations and those of other plays modeled on Roman comedy were common in the schools and universities throughout the period.²

Another example of the importance which was beginning to attach to Plautus in the schools is given us by Fox in his account of the life of Robert Barnes, who suffered martyrdom in 1540. He was an Augustinian friar of Cambridge, then a student at Louvain, and finally returned to Cambridge, where he was made prior of the house. "At that time the knowledge of good letters was scarcely entred into the universitie, all things being full of rudeness and barbaritie, saving in very few which were privie and secret. Whereupon Barns, having some feeling of better learning and authors, began in his house to read Terence, Plautus, and Cicero, so that what with his industrie, pains, and labour, and with the help of Thomas Parnel, his scholer, whom he brought from Lovain with him, reading *Copia verborum et rerum*, he caused the house shortly to flourish with good letters, and made a great part of the house learned (which before were drowned in barbarous rudeness)."³

The first translation of any part of Plautus's comedies which I have met is in Sir Thomas Elyot's *magnum opus*—*The Boke named the Governour*, which was published in 1531. The author is making a general defence of poets, and in particular he wishes to show "that by comedies good counsaile is ministered." He translates ten lines from the *Eunuchus* of Terence in defence of this position and then continues: "But nowe to come to other poetes what may be better saide than is written by Plautus in his first comedie?"

"Verily Vertue dothe all things excelle.

For if libertie, helthe, lyvyng and substance,
Our countray, our parentes and children do well
It hapneth by vertue; she doth all advance.

Vertue hath all things under governaunce,
And in whom of vertue is founden great plentie,
Any thinge that is good may never be deintie."⁴

*Plautus,
Amphyt. Alc.
log'tur.*

¹ But see the reference to More's *Utopia*, p. 25 of the present study.

² Hazlitt's edition of Warton is wrong in giving the date of the above play as 1528, and in this mistake has been followed by some later writers. *V. Hist. Eng. Poet.*, Vol. III, p. 289, and Vol. IV, p. 5.

³ Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, Vol. II, p. 517, col. 2.

⁴ *The Governour*, Vol. I, pp. 127-28.

The passage which Elyot has translated is from the *Amphitruo* of Plautus (Act II, Sc. ii, ll. 17-21) and reads as follows:

*Virtus praeium est optimum:
Virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto.
Libertas, salus, vita, res, parentes,
Patria et prognati tutantur, servantur:
Virtus omnia in se habet: omnia assunt bona quem penes est
virtus.*

That the leaders in the educational revolution which was being accomplished, knew Plautus well goes without saying. Latimer's sermons frequently allude to some character of his comedies or quote some moral saying from them. Erasmus seems to have been particularly fond of the Latin comedies, and to have known them particularly well. I have selected only a few passages bearing on this point, drawn chiefly from his *Colloquies*:

I won't say *drink and blow*, which Plautus says is a hard matter to do.¹

In short I think your landlord was a greater miser than Euclio in Plautus,² (i.e. in the *Aulularia*).

Will you admit of Plautus for an author? Yes, if he says that which is right.³

Sometimes with the old fellow in Plautus, they [old men] are brought back to their horn-book again, to learn to spell their fortune in love.⁴

Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1515-16) contains a reference to the occasions "when one of Plautus's comedies is on the stage, and a company of servants are acting their parts," and the reference is of such a nature that it would seem to justify the conclusion that such an event was by no means uncommon at that time.

Such examples prove beyond question that the scholars of the period knew Plautus, and that very intimately. It is perhaps worthy of note, because it is what we should not expect, that Plautus is not mentioned in the list of books

¹ Erasmus's *Colloquies*, translation by N. Bailey, Vol. I, p. 427 (Reeves and Turner, Lond., 1878). The remark is made by Tranio to Theuropides in the *Mostellaria*, Act III, Sc. II.

² *Ibid.*, *The Wealthy Miser*, Vol. II, p. 277.

³ *Ibid.*, *The Epicurean*, Vol. II, p. 328.

⁴ *Praise of Folly. Once an old man and twice a child*, p. 18 (Reeves and Turner, Lond.). The reference is probably to Stalino in the *Casina*.

comprising the library of the Earl of Kildare in 1526.¹ But the significance of an omission of this sort may be very small or nothing. Indeed we can hardly be far wrong in asserting that in the schools and universities at this time no Latin author, with the exception of Cicero, was so generally studied and known. This conclusion is strengthened by a statement such as that made by Ascham in a letter to Brandesby in 1542-43. There had been no regular Greek professorship at Cambridge previous to 1540, and Ascham had been appointed by the university at a liberal salary to make up the deficiency as well as possible, but in the above-mentioned year Henry VIII. had established six Regius Professorships, and Cambridge acquired the services of men like Smith and Cheke, who were to make famous throughout Europe the name of the university. In the letter referred to, Ascham is describing and exulting over the improved condition of things: "Sophocles and Euripides," he declares, "are now more familiar to us than Plautus was when you were here. . . . There are more copies of Isocrates to be met with now than there were of Terence then. Yet we do not treat the Latin writers with contempt, but we cherish the best of them who flourished in the golden age of their literature."² That Ascham himself knew Latin comedy well we have abundant evidence in *The Schoolmaster*. Besides frequent references considerable space is devoted to a eulogy of the works of Plautus, followed by a critical examination and comparison of the comedies of both Plautus and Terence. "But surely," he says, "if judgment for the tongue and direction for the manners be wisely joined with the diligent reading of Plautus, then truly Plautus, for that pureness of the Latin tongue in Rome, when Rome did most flourish in well-doing, and so thereby in well-speaking also, is such a plentiful storehouse for common eloquence in mean matters, and all private men's affairs, as the Latin tongue, for that respect, hath not the like again. When I remember the worthy time of Rome wherein Plautus did live, I must needs honor the talk of that time, which we see Plautus doth use."³ Ascham then goes on to consider the matter, metre, and verse of both comedy-writers, all of which he finds of a very

¹ *Retrospective Review*, Vol. I (2d Series), p. 136.

² Ascham, *Works*, Vol. I, Pt. I, xxxvii (Lond., 1865).

³ Ascham, *Works*, Vol. III, p. 245 ff.

ordinary character. He commends Plautus chiefly for copiousness of language, and Terence for the purity and propriety of his diction.

That Plautus continued to be read at the universities during the succeeding days when learning had declined we can hardly doubt, though our information regarding the school curricula of this time is not very extensive.¹ At Cambridge his comedies must have claimed a considerable share of attention, for in 1564, on the occasion of the Queen's visit, the *Aulularia* was staged by students of the different colleges. "This day at ixth of the clock after supper was plaid before her Ma^{tie} in the King's Colledge Chapel upon a scaffold *Aulularia Plauti* the partes whereof were chosen through the whole university, King's Colledge being only accepted."² The works of the band of dramatists known as the "university wits" make occasional mention of both the Roman comedy-writers. From the time of the Renaissance Plautus's position as a classic of Latin literature has been assured, and at no time since then have his works been in any danger of undue neglect.

¹ In Gascoigne's *Glasse of Government* we have four boys just about to enter the university, and their previous study has been on the *Colloquies* of Erasmus, Cicero, Terence, and Vergil. [*The Complete Poems of George Gascoigne*, ed. Hazlitt, p. 14-15 (Roxburghe Library, 1870).] A list of the expenses of two boys at Eton College in 1560 has been preserved, and the books bought by them were "Lucian's *Dialogues*, *The Kynges Grammar*, Marcus Tullius *Offic.*, *Fabulae Aesopi*, Tullies *Atticum*." [*Retrospective Review*, Vol. II (2d Series), p. 140.] In neither of these cases, however, should we expect to find Plautus studied, for in only rare instances would he be read by students before entering the university.

² Nichols, *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. III, p. 177.

CHAPTER III

EARLY DRAMATIC PIECES INFLUENCED BY LATIN COMEDY

We have noticed how firmly Plautus and Terence had established themselves in the universities and how familiarly they were known to the scholars of England by the end of the third decade of the sixteenth century. We have seen that in 1520 "a goodlie comedie of Plautus"—probably in Latin—was played before the King and the French hostages at Greenwich. One of the early issues of Caxton's press had been a complete edition of Terence, published in 1497,¹ and in the same year Pynson printed at the Oxford press what was probably its first issue—the *Andria*.² Before 1530 an English translation of this play had appeared. It would have been strange indeed had this interest in the works of the two great Latin comedy-writers produced no appreciable result on the dramatic attempts of the time, especially when we remember that the dramatists were almost all university men. And at this point it is necessary to remember that in noting the influence of Latin comedy on our literature, it is frequently impossible to distinguish between the claims of Plautus and of Terence to have given the inspiration to the English author. The stock characters of the parasite, the courtesan, the intriguing slave, etc., are common to both, and while it is possible to distinguish the characteristics of Plautus's *dramatis personae* from those of Terence, their direct descendants in English comedy rarely bear the distinctive earmarks of the one Latin writer or of the other with sufficient accuracy to enable us to trace their origin. In many cases they are doubtless reminiscences of corresponding characters in the works of both Plautus and Terence, and even, at times, as we shall have occasion to note, minglings of two of the *personae* of Roman comedy.

One of the first English dramatic pieces which shows unmistakably the influence of Latin comedy is the interlude

¹ Lowndes, *Bibliographer's Manual*.

² Madan, *Early Oxford Press*, p. 2 (Ox. Hist. Soc., Vol. XXIX, 1895).

Calisto and Meliboea,¹ published about 1530, the colophon of which reads: *Johes Rastell me imprimi fecit*. A Spanish play on the same subject had been written much earlier. The story—a young man in love applying to a procuress to enable him to get possession of the object of his passion—carries us at once into the world of Roman comedy. Calisto, the hero, in his unreasoning, animal-like love for Meliboea deifies his mistress, and is willing to give his gold, his cloak—everything, to compass the desired end. He sits down and bemoans his lot, handing over the conduct of the affair almost entirely to the “parasite,” Sempronio, who, by the way, is rather the resourceful slave of the ancient drama than a parasite. Unlike the former, however, he is not faithful to the interests of his master. Celestina, the procuress, is influenced only by mercenary motives, is hypocritical, and has no redeeming feature. Thus far the almost perfect correspondence to the ancient comedy is clearly seen and in sufficient detail. Another point worthy of notice is the significant dream of Danio, the father of Meliboea, in which, under symbolic forms, is typified the danger in which his daughter stands. With this compare, for example, the dream in the *Rudens*, Act III, Sc. i, where Daemones foresees similar peril in the form of a she-ape trying to rob a swallow’s nest. Compare also the dream of Demipho in *Mercator*, Act II, Sc. i. The development is very slight; there is no attempt at poetic justice, and no concluding general *dénouement*. A long moral homily by Danio closes the piece.²

The farces *Thersites* and *Jack Juggler* both demand attention in a study of the early influence of Latin comedy. *Thersites*³ was written in 1537, the year of the birth of Edward VI., for in the concluding speech, after requesting prayers for the king, the author continues:

Beseech ye also that God may save his queen,
Lovely Lady Jane and the prince that he hath sent them between.

¹ Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, ed. Hazlitt, Vol. I, p. 51.

² It is a little difficult to understand why Professor Brandl classes this play among those which were influenced by the “Terence imitations” of the German Humanists. There is no trace of this influence in the play itself; and we have no external evidence that the Neo-Latin drama of Germany had as yet acquired any vogue in England.

³ Hazlitt's Dodsley, Vol. I, p. 389. For analysis of the piece see Collier's *History of Dramatic Poetry*, Vol. II, 399 ff.

The play consists of a number of loosely connected scenes, illustrative of the character of the hero, a ridiculous braggart, and it has sometimes been considered as an outgrowth of the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus.¹ For example Jusserand, speaking of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, says: "*La donnée, l'esprit, les bouffonneries, les plaisanteries, l'observation des caractères, les grossièretés, les jeux de mots, tout ici comme dans Thersite fait penser à un Plaute anglais parlant comme le Plaute Romain pour des gens peu instruits et peu intelligents.*"² But neither in the case of this general spirit, nor of the central *motif* is it probable that we are dealing with a case of genuine Plautine influence. The braggart is unprovided with a parasite, which omission would have rendered Pyrgopolinices helpless; nor are the characteristics of the latter, except as they belong to the genus, notably present. Moreover the conception of the "miles gloriosus" is an old one in English literature, and with more or less variation from original types there has been a long line of successors to Hunferth in *Beowulf* and "Kay the crabbed" of the Arthurian story. Especially toward the close of the sixteenth century a very great number of plays rang the changes on this popular character.³ In the Mystery Plays the rôle of Herod was invariably that of loud, unrestrained boasting, coupled with a great deal of comic raging about. There is one character of our ancient national drama, however, who would seem to be quite clearly the prototype of Thersites—Watkyn, in the play of *Candlemas Day*⁴ in the Digby Mysteries. The subject of the piece is the Slaughter of the Innocents. Watkyn comes to Herod and beseeches him "for Mahound's sake make me a knight." He is deeply impressed with a sense of his own valor:

Though I say it myself I am a man of myght.

Herod refuses his request, but gives him permission to go forth with the soldiers to the work of slaughter. Watkyn is much pleased and feels that he shall be able to slay the children finely. He confesses, however:

But yitt I drede no thyng more than a woman with a rokke.

¹ Cf. Reinhardstoettner, *Plautus*, p. 638.

² *Le Théâtre en Angleterre*, p. 132.

³ V. Graf, *Der Miles Gloriosus im Englischen Drama*, etc., pp. 16, 20, *et passim*.

⁴ *Ancient Mysteries from the Digby Manuscripts*. Printed for the Abbotsford Club, Edin., 1835.

Herod rebukes and sneers at him for this admission, and Watkyn declares:

And ther come an hundred women I wole not ffleen,
though he thinks it will be desirable to kill the children if possible when the mothers are not present. At length, having joined Herod's knights, Watkyn comes to the work of slaughter, and addresses the mothers in very pompous language. After a time the women centre their attention on him, and as soon as they begin to make demonstrations, Watkyn weakens. He declares:

My heart begynne to fayle and waxeth feynt,
but he threatens his enemies:

But ye shall lose your goods as traitors atteynt.

This is too much for the patience of the already sorely tried women, who now attack Watkyn, laying on with their distaffs, which punishment he is forced to endure till the knights come to his rescue. At this point, and rather abruptly, Watkyn's part in the play is concluded.

Thersites is an even more farcical, impossible specimen of the same type. He has more of the braggadocio spirit than Watkyn. His speeches to his mother, first when refusing her request that he give up his bloody intentions, and later when he forces her to bless him and relieve Telemachus of his distress, are quite in the vein of Watkyn's address to the Israelitish mothers. His combat with a snail and final victory over his antagonist, are, of course, the purest farce. As soon as a soldier appears Thersites runs behind his mother, crying:

O mother, mother, I pray thee me hide:
Throw something over me, and cover me every side.

At the second appearance of the soldier the stage-direction reads: "And then he (the soldier) must strike at him, and Thersites must run away, and leave his club and sword behind."

The spirit of childish farcicalness which pervades the whole piece is a development of the elements we have seen in *Candlemas Day*. The frank coarseness and unrestrained fun, the Skeltonic doggerel verses, the long list of onomatopoeic names contained in one of the speeches of Thersites, all point to its

vital connection with the national drama. Such bewildering alliteration as:

Proud Pierce Pick-thank that picked Parnel's purse,
Cut will the cakes, though Kate do cry and curse,

and the talking of disconnected nonsense are common in Herod's speeches, while the use of Latin phrases—cf. Thersites's *condatur mihi galea*—is likewise characteristic of the most popular character of the Mysteries. That he is also related to the Devil of the old plays, Thersites himself announces by an "Oh, what a fellow am I." It is difficult to appreciate M. Jusserand's reference to "*l'observation des caractères*" in *Thersites*, for there is nothing of it in the whole play, with the questionable exception of the case of the hero, who is too absurd to be real. The purely and confessedly farcical nature of the whole *ipso facto* shuts out the possibility of real characterization. Professor Brandl considers *Thersites* as *inhaltlich eine Charakterstudie über einen Prahlhans in der Art des Pyrgopolynikes*.¹ Not only is it not a character-study in any real sense, for the fun arises generally in the utter absurdity and impossibility of the situation, but I have been unable to find any distinctly Plautine characteristics in the piece, and in spite of its classical setting I think we should regard it as a natural development of the comic elements in the earlier Mystery Plays. It is not difficult to conceive of the author of *Thersites* as a man who had never read a single Latin comedy.

The farce of *Jack Juggler*, probably written during the reign of Edward VI., in its prologue confesses itself a very unambitious adaptation of the *Amphitruo* of Plautus. The author declares that "it is a thing natural" for man "to have at times convenient pastance, mirth and pleasures, so they be joined with honesty and kept within due measures"; this was the belief of the great philosophers of ancient days, including Cicero Tullius, who "above all other things commendeth the old comedy,

. . . . And in this manner of making Plautus did excel,

As now he hath done this matter not worth an oyster shell,
Except percase it shall fortune to make you laugh well.

¹ *Quellen des Weltlichen Dramas in England vor Shakespeare*, p. lxxi.

And for that purpose only this maker did it write,
 Taking the ground thereof out of Plautus's first comedy
 And the first sentence of the same."¹

There is, however, little similarity between *Jack Juggler* and the *Amphitruo* considered as wholes. The former may be called an adaptation of a portion of the first part of the Latin comedy, i.e., to the end of Act II, Sc. i. With the rest of the play, the central situation, or the *dénouement*, it has nothing to do. In the words of Professor Child, it is the play of *Amphitryon* without the part of *Amphitryon*.² A brief outline of the farce will make this clearer.

Jack Juggler in the opening speech tells us that he wishes to be revenged on Jenkin Careaway, page of Master Bongrace, "for a matter that fell between us a-late." The master is to sup at the house of a friend and has commissioned Jenkin to "thither fetch my dame Mistress Bongrace." Jenkin has been loitering and playing by the way till now it is too late to execute his master's commands. He concocts an improbable story to serve as an excuse with his mistress, but is very apprehensive of meeting her. When he reaches the house he is accosted by Jack Juggler, disguised so as to appear the image of Jenkin's own self, and a scene ensues closely modeled on that between Mercury and Sosia in the *Amphitruo*. In general it is simply the similarity in the situations which occasions a similarity in the dialogue of the two plays; in a few instances, however, there is an approach to literal translation. Compare, for instance, Jack's address to his fists:

Jack. Now fists me-thinketh yesterday seven yers past,
 That four men asleep at my feet you cast,
 And this same day you did no manner good,
 Nor were not washen in warm blood.

Jenkin. Four hath he slain and now well I see,
 That it must be my chance the fifth to be.³

with Mercury's corresponding speech:

Jam pridem videtur factum heri quod homines quattuor

In soporem collocastis nudos. Sosia. Formido male

*Ne ego hic nomen meum commutem et Quintus fiam e Sosia.*⁴

¹ *Jack Juggler* (Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, ed. Hazlitt), Vol. II, pp. 111-112.

² V. *Four Old Plays*, 1848, pp. 9-12.

³ *Jack Juggler*, p. 122.

⁴ *Amphitruo*, I, i, v. 302-305.

Jenkin's begging leave of Jack Juggler to tell the truth without being beaten for so doing, likewise follows the *Amphitruo* version rather closely; cf.:

Jenkin. But sir, might I be bold to say one thing

Without any blows and without any beating?

Jack. Truce for a while; say on what thee lust.

Jenkin. May a man to your honesty by your word trust?

with Sosia's speech:

So. *Obsecro ut per pacem liceat te alloqui ut ne vapulem.*

Me. *Immo indutiae parumper fiant siquid vis loqui.*

So. *Non loquar nisi pace facta, quando pugnus plus vales.*

Me. *Dic [ito] siquid vis: non nocebo. So. Quae fidei credo?*¹

Jack finally gives over and Jenkin falls to the mercy of his mistress, who berates him soundly and hardly gives him an opportunity of propounding his theory of a double identity. This scene is entirely original. A few lines addressed by Jack to the audience separates it from that in which Jenkin's master is indignant with his page's failure to do what he was commanded, as also with his story about having met his own double. The latter is very similar to the first scene of Act II of the Latin play, in which Amphitruo upbraids Sosia. Bongrace and his wife are both convinced that the page is responsible for the miscarriage of their arrangements, but no explanation of his complete bewilderment is given. Then follows a long speech, in which Jenkin bewails his lot, and the play is concluded with a didactic epilogue setting forth that

Such is the fashion of the world now-a-days

That the simple innocents are deluded.

He that is stronger and more of power and might,

If he be disposed to revenge his cause,

Woll soon pick a quarrel, be it wrong or right,

To the inferior and weaker for a couple of straws.

Then he woll put him to the worse, either by false injury,

Or by some craft and subtlety, or else by plain tyranny.

The resemblance to Plautus is in the situation only. Alcmena's dignified, frank nature finds no counterpart in Mistress Bongrace, who is "a very cursed shrew, by the blessed

¹ *Ibid.*, I, i, v. 388-392.

Trinity, and a very devil." She is quite certain at first that her husband has designedly prevented her going to sup with him, and expresses herself vigorously on the subject, but when the husband finally arrives, and she is convinced of his innocence, she is very affectionate, and takes credit to herself for her constant faith in him. Master Bongrace, whom we know very slightly, seems a rather submissive husband, though Jenkin informs us that

My master himself is worse than she [the wife],
If he once thoroughly angered be.

In the situation, then, and in some verbal similarities consists the whole correspondence between the two plays. *Jack Juggler* can present only very slight claims to be, in any true sense of the word, a comedy. We have two or three comic situations which have a rather more vital connection with each other than the purely chronological one, but of real story development or dramatic structure there is nothing. The Plautine situations have been adapted to the conditions of the native environment, but the author has made no attempt whatever to produce an adaptation of the Latin comedy in its entirety, or as a developing plot, or even as an effectively disposed mass of material. The comic scenes follow each other to a certain point, and then for no particular reason come to a conclusion. The dumbfounded Careaway is left still believing that he has been assaulted by his own double, and his master and mistress are equally far from a rational explanation. The improbability of the whole play is much greater than that of the Latin comedy owing to the fact that we are asked to believe that Jack Juggler was able to disguise himself so perfectly as to play the rôle which was assigned to Mercury in the *Amphitruo*. In a word, the influence of the Latin play on *Jack Juggler* has been of an external kind, the essentials of dramatic conception and structure remaining quite unassimilated.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY ENGLISH COMEDY

Had the progress of English dramatic literature remained quite unaffected by the study and imitation of Latin plays there can be no question that eventually there would have been evolved from the purely native elements a strong, legitimate comedy. The seeds for such a growth had been sown long before, and even the Mysteries furnish us examples of such purely comic figures as Mak, the sheep-stealer, in the Towneley plays, and Watkyn in the Digby Mysteries. When we come to the Moralities, the Vice at once suggests himself in this connection. The Moralities represent a dramatic advance chiefly in the way of characterization; in many cases little more than a concrete name was necessary to transform an abstraction into a typical, but withal, a real character. Even while these abstractions were preserved they were placed in an environment which was practically that of the audience who listened to the play. From the picturing of type characters of this kind, placed in a setting which represented a minimum of unified or developing plot, the transition to regular comedy was through a double medium—that of the interlude and of the farce. When Rastell, in 1533, printed several of the interludes of John Heywood, genuine English comedy was almost an accomplished fact. In these pieces characterization and comic situation were united in a highly diverting series of scenes, though there was usually a total lack of dramatic quality, as, for example, in the case of *The Four P's*. The service performed by the farce was complementary to that of the interlude. In the latter the fun arose in great measure as an outgrowth of the characters of the *dramatis personae*, who in turn created comic situations: in the farce, e.g., *Thersites* or *Jack Juggler*, the utterly ridiculous character of the whole practically makes characterization impossible, while in the inherent farcicalness of the situation consist the laughter-provoking elements. Illustrations of this point readily suggest themselves, e.g., *Thersites's* combat with the

snail, or Jenkin Careaway's perplexity while undergoing a cudgeling from his supposed double, in both of which cases we have the lack of correspondence between the actual and the imagined which is necessary to comedy, the real character of the *personae* remaining in the background.

The farce and the interlude taken together, then, almost provide the necessary bridging over of the gulf between the Moralities and comedy proper, only a developing unified plot being still necessary. That the native drama would have eventually arrived at this independently there can be no reasonable doubt when we consider how logically and progressively it had previously developed in the direction of true comedy. But an external influence was brought to bear upon it which shortened the length of this transition period very materially, viz., the influence of the comedies of Plautus and Terence.

The plot structure of Greek drama underwent the most radical modifications in the hands of Roman comedy-writers, and in the greater complexity of the Latin play the source from which its elements have been derived is often almost entirely obscured. But the changes were not made independently of artistic considerations. Nowhere does the remarkable genius of Plautus show itself more clearly than in his effective disposition of material: he develops his story with a perfect though probably unconscious fidelity to artistic law. The claim has been made for the *Captivi* that it is the best constructed drama in existence. But that which is of special interest to us here is to note the many similarities between the Latin drama and that of England after the latter had come under the influence of the works of Plautus and Terence. One of the chief differences between a work like *Ralph Roister Doister* on the one hand, and *Jack Juggler* and most of Heywood's pieces on the other, is this: the latter develop an absurd situation as far as possible, the climax coinciding with the conclusion of the play; in the former we have an upward movement toward a climax, followed by the falling movement ending with the "catastrophe." That this advance was owing to the study of Latin models we can not doubt.

Many other features of the work of Plautus and Terence, some of a merely accessory character, some of the very essence of Latin dramatic art, were gradually incorporated by English comedy. The prologues to Plautus's plays—most of them date

from a period subsequent to his death—not assigned to any particular character, and combining, as they do, the double function of explanation and apology, are copied closely by Elizabethan writers. Plautus's predilection for a great number of scenes is preserved in early English comedy, and by a natural development has taken on the additional characteristic of frequent change of place—a characteristic which has become the despair of the modern stage manager. The feature of underplots, bearing a more or less vital relation to the main plot of the play, has persisted. The frequent preponderance of the poetical over the dramatic, the introduction of purely lyrical passages, the turning to dramatic account of the change of metres, and in a less formal way, the spontaneous flow of language, the strong exuberant vitality, the sense of the deep joy of living, are not more characteristic of the Plautine than of the Elizabethan drama. To say that the English drama derived these characteristics entirely from Latin comedy would be manifestly unfair, and with regard to diction and informing spirit it would be very easy to overestimate the importance of the influence. But on the side of form the English dramatists went to school to Plautus and Terence, and it was in this school that they gained almost their entire education in the matter of dramatic structure.

It is not to be imagined that English drama previous to *Ralph Roister Doister* had been absolutely untouched in its development by the models of Latin drama. Indeed it is difficult to believe that the untrammelled flow and sententious vigor of Heywood's dialogue owes nothing to the comedy of Plautus. But it was on the constructive side that this influence now became most pronounced and most beneficial, and it was derived to comedy through three main channels:

1. The study of Plautus and Terence in the schools.
2. The writing and acting in the schools of Latin plays and English plays which were modeled on Latin comedy.
3. The vogue in England of the Neo-Latin drama of the German Humanists.

The first of these points has been already dealt with. The study of Terence had never died out in the schools; Plautus was among the first of the Latin classics to be reestablished in the seat of honor at the time of the early Renaissance of learning. "A goodlie comedie of Plautus" was staged at Greenwich in 1520,

and before 1530 the *Andria* of Terence had been translated¹ and almost certainly acted.² We have also seen how commonly the Latin comedy-writers were quoted by scholars in the first half of the century, and that they were among the favorite authors of educated men there is abundant evidence.

The custom of giving plays at the great public schools and universities was a very old one, though definite information is almost entirely lacking until the performance of the *Dido* of Rightwise between 1522 and 1532.³ We also know that in 1525 a play was presented by the students of Eton College.⁴ The practice continued uninterruptedly till the time of the Commonwealth, and, together with disputations, formed the chief method of entertaining royalty at the universities. Elizabeth seems to have been particularly fond of these representations,⁵ while the erudite James I. held them in slight esteem. Several names have come down to us which are intimately associated with the early history of the school drama. Between 1520 and 1532 were produced the *Mundus Plumbeus* and the *Microcosmus* of Thomas Artour of Cambridge, and in 1535 the *Piscator or the Fisher Caught* of John Hoker of Oxford. In 1546 John Christopherson, "a very grave and learned divine," wrote his tragedy of *Jephtha* as a contribution to the Christmas festivities at Cambridge. Better known, perhaps, was Ralph Radcliffe, who, having obtained a grant of the house of Carmelites at Hitchin, opened a school and fitted up one room for the purpose of enabling his pupils to give dramatic performances. He was the author of ten tragedies and comedies, none of which seem to have been printed.⁶ The names of these plays, together with the description of them given us by Bale—*spectacula simul jucunda et honesta*—make probable the inference that Radcliffe had come under the influence of the Christian drama of Germany.⁷ Of a similar

¹ The *Andria* is cited three times by Leonard Cox in his *The Arte or Crafte of Rhetoryke*, v. reprint "English Studies," Univ. of Chicago, ed. F. I. Carpenter, pp. 55, 76, 77.

² The language of the prologue and the epilogue justify this conclusion.

³ *Latin plays in University of Cambridge*, Retrospective Review, Vol. XII, p. 7.

⁴ H. C. Maxwell Lyte, *A History of Eton College*, p. 115, quotes from *Eton Audit Book*, 1525-26, "Pro expensis circa ornamenta ad duos lusus in aula tempore natalis Domini Xs."

⁵ See accounts of her visit to Oxford in 1566 and 1592 in *Elizabethan Oxford*, ed. C. Plummer (Ox. Hist. Soc., 1886). For her visit to Cambridge in 1564 see Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. III, p. 177.

⁶ For list of Radcliffe's works, v. Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, Vol. I, p. 204.

⁷ V. next chapter.

character was the work of Nicholas Grimalde,¹ who lectured at Christ Church on Terence, Cicero, Horace, and Xenophon. In 1543 he published at Cologne his *Christus Redivivus*² and in 1548 his *Archipropheta sive Johannes Baptista*, this last work entitling him, in Professor Herford's opinion, to a "distinguished position in the history of the English drama as the author of the first extant tragedy."³

The last of these writers of school plays whom we shall consider is for our purpose by far the most important—Nicholas Udall,⁴ successively master of Eton and Westminster schools. He was appointed to the head-mastership of Eton in 1534, and remained in this position for nearly eight years. The students at this school ordinarily gave a Latin play once a year.⁵ The representation took place during the Christmas holidays, and before a public audience, and English plays were permitted provided any could be found of sufficient excellence.⁶ A year before entering on his duties at Eton Udall had published his *Floures for Latine spekyng selected and gathered oute of Terence and the same translated into English*. Other editions of this work—which included the first three comedies of Terence—appeared in 1538, 1544, and 1560, and an enlarged edition by John Higgins was printed in 1575 and 1581. We know that Udall wrote *plures comoediae* and a tragedy *de Papatu*,⁷ and his play *Ezechias*, in English, was performed before Queen Elizabeth at Cambridge in 1564. The only extant play by Udall is that to which is usually accorded the honor of being the first English comedy—*Ralph Roister Doister*, and it is probable that it was written for the boys of Eton school and during the author's head-mastership, i.e., before 1541.⁸

¹ V. Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, p. 230.

² Reprinted in publications of Modern Language Association, Vol. XIV.

³ *The Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 113.

⁴ The best accounts of the life of Udall are that by Sidney Lee in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and that by William Durrant Cooper, prefixed to the Old Shakespeare Society's edition of *Ralph Roister Doister*.

⁵ I have not been able to consult the Eton *Consuetudinary*, but Sidney Lee in his life of Udall (*Dic. Nat. Biog.*), states that the plays thus given were those of Terence and Plautus.

⁶ *Interdum etiam exhibet Anglico sermone contextas fabulas si quae habeant acumen et leporem*. From the ancient *Consuetudinary* of Eton school, quoted by Collier, II, pp. 445-46, and Warton, III, p. 308.

⁷ Warton, III, 308, quoting from Royal MS., 18 A, lxiv.

⁸ Professor Hales maintains that the play was not written before 1551, but his argument is not convincing. V. *Eng. Stu.*, Vol. XV.

It is a rather significant fact in the history of the development of English drama that our first extant comedy is based upon one of the plays of Plautus—the *Miles Gloriosus*. *Ralph Roister Doister* is so well known that it is unnecessary to give a sketch of the plot in this connection. The prologue opens with a defence of honest mirth, and on these lines the similar passage in the prologue of *Jack Juggler* would seem to be modeled, if indeed it is certainly the later of the two productions. Another similarity consists in their both referring to Plautus as having excelled in this manner of making. The prologue of *Ralph Roister Doister* says:

The wyse poets long time heretofore
Under merrie comedies secretes did declare,
Wherein was contained very vertuous lore,
With mysteries and forewarnings very rare.
Suche to write neether Plautus nor Terence dyd spare,
Whiche among the learned at this day beares the bell:
These with such other therein dyd excell.

The plot of the comedy is, as far as we know, entirely original with the author, and although two of the characters—Ralph, the vainglorious coward, and Matthew Merrygreke, the astute parasite—are taken from the *Miles Gloriosus*, the whole atmosphere and setting of the play is pronouncedly English. Ralph is clearly of the Pyrgopolinices type. His chief characteristics are summed up for us by the parasite:

All the day long is he facing and craking
Of his great actes in fighting and fraymaking;
But, when Roister Doister is put to his prooffe,
To keepe the Queenes peace is more for his behoofe.
If any woman smyle or cast on hym an eye,
Up is he to the harde eares in love by-and-by,
And in all the hotte haste must she be hys wife,
Else farewell hys good days, and farewell his life!¹

Like his immortal prototype he has an oppressive sense of his own worth, and half despairingly he asks Matthew:

Why did God make me suche a goodly person?

In the true ancient fashion he is dependent upon his parasite at every moment. The latter, like Artotrogus of the *Miles Gloriosus*, and, indeed, like all others of the type in Plautus,

¹ Act I, Sc. 1, ll. 35-42 (Manly, *The Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, Vol. II).

is chiefly interested in providing himself with meat and drink at the expense of some patron who is willing to be paid in flattery. Like Artotrogus, too, he persuades his victim that he is remarkable chiefly in two ways—for his unparalleled personal bravery, and for his attractiveness in the eyes of women. Merrygreke, however, is not a reproduction of Artotrogus as Roister Doister is of Pyrgopolinices. He not only flatters but at times flouts the braggart wooer; he is even more interested in developing the comic possibilities of the situation than in extracting personal gain from the dupe whom he has in his toils. It is in this rôle of a mirth-loving schemer, in which he appears the incarnation of the spirit of fun, that we recognize his relationship to the older Vice. In spite of what at first sight might appear a somewhat incongruous combination we have a very real and very entertaining character in Merrygreke. As for the other *dramatis personae* it is only necessary to notice that they are clearly differentiated, genuine characters drawn from contemporary English life. The movement of the play never flags, the conversation flows briskly and spiritedly, and the interest in the story is preserved to the very close. But perhaps in no particular is a greater advance over the work of earlier English play-writers to be noticed than in the matter of dramatic technique. There are five acts, subdivided into scenes, and the disposition and inter-relating of the details of the plot are of a very skillful kind. Act I introduces us to almost all the characters, and puts us in touch with the general situation. Ralph, in love with the widow Dame Custance, is chiefly concerned regarding a rival of whom he has heard—a merchant named Gawin Goodluck. Merrygreke consoles him by the assurance that his personal charms are irresistible. Then we have some scenes between Ralph and his servants on the one side, and the servants of Dame Custance on the other, and Madge Mumblecrust finally delivers to her mistress a letter from Ralph. The second act is rather short and relates the difficulties attendant on the efforts of one of Ralph's servants to deliver a ring and a token to Dame Custance from his master. But at length, introducing himself to the servants of the widow as a messenger from their mistress's future husband, he easily persuades them to deliver the knick-knacks, and they in turn are soundly rated by the lady for having such commerce with a person of whom they know

nothing. This act advances the course of the plot but little. In Act III Merrygreke learns from Dame Custance that she is engaged to Gawin Goodluck, and that she despises Ralph Roister Doister, whose letter she has not even read. The parasite dutifully reports this to his master, who is so chagrined that he declares he will die forthwith; Merrygreke takes his statement literally for the sake of the promised fun, and calls in servants to pray "and for hym ring a peale." After a time Ralph recovers, and on Merrygreke's advice goes to serenade the widow, who laughs him to scorn. She produces the letter which she had received, and Merrygreke reads it in such a way that by altering the punctuation he gives to it a meaning quite contrary to that which it was intended to convey. Ralph thereupon denies the authorship, and when Dame Custance takes her leave he vows to be revenged on the scrivener whom he had employed. The latter, however, reads his composition in such a way that the baffled Ralph has to admit its excellence.

The fourth act is largely made up of pure farce. Sim Suresby, the servant of Gawin Goodluck, has been sent by his master to salute Dame Custance. Just at this juncture Ralph and Merrygreke arrive, the former talking loudly of arms and preparations for battle, and addressing Custance as "sweete wife," the effect of which is that Sim leaves hurriedly to inform his master of the new state of affairs. Custance is so enraged that she and her maids, with the help of Tristram Trusty, a neighbor, attack Roister Doister and his men. A pitched battle ensues, kitchen utensils being the chief weapons, and Ralph is soundly cudged by Custance, who is aided by the deceitful parasite.

In the fifth act Gawin Goodluck's mistaken ideas regarding his affianced are dispelled, and the play concludes happily for everyone, Ralph being invited to the wedding supper.

This short sketch will serve to show how much Udall had learned regarding the framework of a play. *Ralph Roister Doister* is one of the first English dramas, the material of which is digested in five acts, subdivided into scenes. But more than this the relation of successive acts to one another is fairly effective. The first act performs exactly the service which a first act should perform. The chief flaw is perhaps to be found in the lack of plot-progress in Act II, but the com-

plications which arise in the course of Ralph's wooing are fully developed by the time we reach the end of the third act. With the beginning of the fourth act Ralph's chances decline rapidly, but a complication arises in the development of the sub-theme to which the last two acts are devoted—the realization of Dame Custance's hopes of happiness. This complication is resolved in Act V, and the play concludes merrily for all the characters. Whether we consider the comedy from the point of view of the genuineness and number of the characters, the spirited nature of the dialogue, or the excellence of its constructive arrangement, we find in *Ralph Roister Doister* an artistic product separated by a long distance from the best of its predecessors in English literature, and that Udall had read his Plautus and Terence to good effect we need no other proof than the single specimen of his "*plures comoediae*" which has survived to modern times.¹

The third source from which Latin comedy was brought to bear upon the development of the English drama, viz., through the Neo-Latin plays of the German Humanists, we shall consider in the next chapter.

¹An interesting reference to school plays is contained in a quotation from Gulielmus Loonus's *Braunii Civitates* (1575), to the effect, that even Plautus, Terence, or Seneca, if they could have witnessed them, would have been delighted and astonished at the grace and elegance displayed by the students at these representations. V. *Retrospective Review*, Vol. XII, p. 20, *Latin Plays in University of Cambridge*. The models of the plays referred to are clearly enough indicated.

CHAPTER V

THE INFLUENCE FROM GERMANY

That the literary relations of England and Germany became more intimate during the sixteenth century than they had ever been before is not strange. In 1509 Pynson had published Alexander Barclay's translation of Sebastian Brandt's *Narrenschiff*—a work which had already won a continental reputation, and the connection thus established continued to grow more intimate. But to the Reformation was due primarily the closer intimacy which came to exist between the two nations at this period. From Germany had come the initial impulse to the great religious movement which was working itself out in Europe, and before Englishmen had become active partisans in the struggle their eyes had been riveted on the world-stirring scenes which were taking place in the theatre of which Germany was the stage. Among the early English dramatic pieces written with a partisan purpose was "the most goodliest disguising or interlude made in Latin and French," which was presented before the king and the French ambassadors at Greenwich in 1527. In this Latin Morality, which was acted by the children of St. Paul's school under the direction of John Rightwise, then head-master, Luther and his wife were characters, and the purpose of the play was to cast ridicule on them and on the principles of the Reformers.¹

The necessary contact had thus been established, and this made it possible that the one form of literary activity which then flourished in Germany—the Latin drama²—might be brought to the notice of Englishmen. Its history on continental soil had been very different from that of the English species. In the case of the latter we have an artificial, amorphous product, as devoid of all real interest or vitality as of progressiveness or development in any direction. Its history is that of the accumulation

¹ Collier, *Hist. Ancient Eng. Poet.*, I, 105 ff.

² Most of the material on this subject I have drawn from Professor Herford's *Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*.

of a heterogeneous mass of materials which never attained to the unity of an organic whole. The *Archipropheta*, one of its earliest products, is usually considered its most creditable. But in Germany the case was different. The writing of Latin plays on the model of those of Plautus and Terence had begun much earlier than in England, and from the first these productions allied themselves to a greater or less extent with contemporary German life. Plays written in Latin were translated into German and *vice versa*, both versions being given on the stage, sometimes one immediately after the other. From a structural point of view the earliest of these productions were indebted but slightly to Roman comedy: it was rather the atmosphere of the Roman theatre and the methods of literary expression which were taken over. At Heidelberg as early as 1470 Jacob Wimpheling produced his *Stylpho*, and in 1498 a much more important play appeared—the *Henno*¹ of Reuchlin. In 1501 a new edition appeared of the tenth century adaptation of Terence—the work of the nun of Ganderheim, and six years later her method was emulated in the *Dorothea* of Chilianus. In the *Henno* and the *Dorothea* we have the prototypes of all the succeeding members of two large classes of Latin plays in Germany. The first—the “Modern Terence” class—adapts a modern farce to the artistic form and style of an ancient comedy. To quote Professor Herford, “certain characters and incidents have a Terentian or Plautine colouring,” and the chief characteristics of the play are “its admirably clear and compact structure,” its “success in satisfying the more mechanical canons of art, skill of structure, unity, singleness of plot.” The second type, which has given the name of the “Christian Terence” to a large class of allied plays, is of more immediate interest to us here. It sought to reproduce essentially the atmosphere and situations of Latin comedy, at the same time eliminating that which was morally objectionable. But it did more than this. In its more developed form of the Biblical drama, which incorporated the main characteristics of the drama of Reuchlin, we have the adaptation of Biblical incidents to the ancient dramatic forms, many of the stock characters and situations of Latin comedy being at the same time preserved. The chief development of

¹ For analysis see Herford, *op. cit.*, p. 81+.

this school came about in Holland, and was the work of three men, all schoolmasters—Gnapheus, Macropedius, and Crocus. Their play-writing was an outcome of their pedagogic endeavors, and represented individual solutions of one great problem, "how, namely, to steep a boy's mind in the admirable colloquial Latin of Terence and Plautus without introducing him prematurely to a world of *lenones* and *meretrices*." Their purpose Professor Herford sums up by denominating them "the ardent Humanists, who vied with the old comic poets, aspired to be the Terences or Plautuses of the age, and to reproduce as far as was consistent with a Biblical subject and a pious intention, the art, the colouring, the society, the atmosphere of Plautus and Terence."¹

It would be aside from our purpose at this point to consider in any detail the enthusiasm which spread throughout Germany for this style of play—the representing of Biblical stories in classical forms. I shall notice briefly only a few of those plays, which we know to have exercised a direct influence in England. Some of the favorite subjects were those connected with the names of Joseph, Judith, Susanna, Zorobabel, Judas, Haman, etc. More popular than any of these, however, was the story of the Prodigal Son, which underwent frequent treatment, and which was soon surrounded by a whole brood of plays on themes which were either related to the Biblical story, or had been adapted to it. The most famous of these pieces was the *Acolastus* of Gnapheus, *alias* Fullonius, the author being a self-confessed admirer of Plautus and Terence; the story of the play is that of the Prodigal Son. The various details of the Biblical story have been sometimes elaborated, sometimes given very summarily, the chief elaboration being in that part which deals with the Prodigal's life as a prodigal, where we have a number of scenes "painted with the genial vigor of Plautus, and a fearless use of his abundant material." The play was written in 1529, and by 1540 an English translation—somewhat in the form of a school exercise-book—had appeared from the pen of John Palsgrave. Another important work of this class, which was also translated into English, was the *Pammachius* of Kirchmayer. The play appeared in 1538, and was shortly followed by the *Pyrgopolinices* of the same author, in which a German prince

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

is pictured as a modern "miles gloriosus." John Bale, who on Cromwell's downfall, had found himself exposed to the anger of his religious enemies, and had deemed it advisable to pass the years from 1540 to 1547 on the continent, was the translator of the *Pammachius*, but we know nothing of his version except his own statement, *Pammachii tragoediam¹ transtuli*. The play was already known in England, however. Kirchmayer had dedicated it to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and its representation in 1545 by the students of Christ's College called forth a long investigation and a subsequent rebuke from Gardiner, chancellor of the university, for its Protestantism was of the most pronounced kind. The influence of a piece which created so much interest must have been considerable, and Professor Herford believes that "the *Kynge Johan* [by the translator of Kirchmayer's drama] owes much of its peculiar construction to a deliberate imitation of the *Pammachius*, and that it was this imitation which finally emancipated Bale from his clumsy efforts to build a Protestant drama on the ruins of the Catholic mystery."

Until recently a thorough study of the Latin drama of England during this period had never been attempted, and the fact that the great majority of the plays have disappeared will always make a full knowledge of the subject impossible. The recent work of George B. Churchill and Wolfgang Keller² has made accessible synopses of the greater number of those plays which are extant. The most important of the influences which largely determined, or at least modified their character, were the Latin plays of Germany and the Plautine-Terentian imitations of Italy, only the former of which we shall notice in this chapter. The English authors of Latin drama were almost invariably schoolmasters, and wrote their plays for the definite purpose of providing material for representation by their students. For instance, we know that Udall wrote *plures comoediae* which have not come down to us. Between 1540 and 1552, Ralph Radcliffe, the schoolmaster of Hitchin, wrote ten comedies and tragedies, only the names of which are preserved, but these, with Bale's information, that they

¹ The second edition has "*tragoedias*"; "*tragoediam*" is the reading of the 1549 edition.

² *Die lateinischen Universitäts-Dramen Englands in der Zeit der Königin Elizabeth.* Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare Gesellschaft, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 220-323.

were *spectacula simul jucunda et honesta*, put it almost beyond doubt that the Christian drama of Germany had furnished the model for Radcliffe's work. Likewise classical in form and Biblical in theme were the plays of Christoferson and Buchanan, as also those of Grimald, whose *Archipropheta* has been called the first extant tragedy of the English drama. And lastly, we may notice the "Exile literature" of Bale and Foxe,—in especial the *Christus Triumphans* of the latter, who had studied the works of the German writers and was greatly indebted to them.

To return to the effect of this whole movement on the English drama written in English. In the first place we have plays on subjects like *Kyng Darius*, *Godly Queene Hester*, and *Susanna*. But the strictly Plautine influence is seen most clearly in a group of plays which derive from the most popular of all the German-Latin pieces—those dealing with the Prodigal Son. We have seen that the *Acolastus* was translated by Palsgrave in 1540; the *Studentes* of Stymmelius was also well-known in England, as was probably the *Rebelles* of Macropedius, though in the latter case external evidence is lacking. These were all variations of the Prodigal Son motif, but gave the story its setting in university life. This latter feature is, of course, not necessarily incorporated in the drama of this type, and in the English plays about to be considered we shall find only one in which it is clearly present.

Before taking up the English plays which were modeled on individual plays of the type we have been considering, it may not be amiss once more to call attention to the impossibility of distinguishing between the influence of Plautus and that of Terence. The names "Modern Terence" and "Christian Terence" might lead to the supposition that such was not the case, but in so far the names are misleading. Gnapheus expressed his admiration of both the great Latin authors; Crocus quotes the *Captivi* and *Heautontimorumenos* in justifying the happy ending of one of his plays. In the description of scenes like those which portray the Prodigal's days of prodigality it is the spontaneous, somewhat gross humor and fun of Plautus which is followed rather than the more restrained and polished manner of Terence. But to attempt anything like a real distinction between the elements derived from the one and from the other is an utterly futile task.

The Disobedient Child,¹ printed in 1560, but probably written about the middle of the century, is one of the earliest English plays undoubtedly modeled after the Christian drama of the German Humanists. The author was Thomas Ingelend, and he chose as the prototype for his drama the *Studentes* of Stymmelius, which had appeared in 1549. The school atmosphere is ever present, a great deal of superfluous learning being introduced, but a genuine attempt is also made to mirror the life of the time, at least to a certain degree. The son's aversion to entering "the house and prison of a schoolmaster" who treats his pupils brutally, where

Their tender bodies both night and day
Are whipped and scourged and beat like a stone,
That from top to toe the skin is away,²

recalls Tusser's famous stanza, in which he has perpetuated the memory of Udall's cruelties. Similar references to other contemporary conditions may be seen in the father's lament that "now-a-days . . . science and learning is so little regarded,"³ as also in the passage in which he reminds us of the decay of the priesthood.⁴

The plot is very simple. A son, refusing to follow his father's advice to devote himself to study, falls in love with a young woman who seems to him the sum of all perfections. He marries her, and is only a very short time in learning that she is a most terrible shrew. Stage directions of the kind, "Here the Wife must strike her Husband handsomely about the shoulders with something" become frequent in the latter part of the play. The son, who is utterly cowed by his terrible wife, runs away and returns to his father. The play has an "unhappy ending," however, for although the father promises to alleviate to some extent his son's pecuniary distresses he informs him that he must return to his wife. The perorator then delivers a moral epilogue on the text: *Qui parcit virgae odit filium*.

In *The Disobedient Child* we have by no means a piece entirely independent of the earlier English drama. Even the Devil is introduced with his usual salutatory address "Ho, ho, ho, what a fellow am I!" though his appearance does seem

¹ Dodsley, Vol. II, p. 265.

² *Ibid.*, p. 273.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

rather incongruous. There is no division into acts and scenes, but the play shows a real advance in structural art,—a juster conception of plot as a progressively developing unity. Perhaps the scene most suggestive of Plautus is that between the man-cook and the maid-cook,¹ who are preparing for the wedding festivities. The cook, as a stock character in comedy, appears in a number of Plautus's plays but not at all in those of Terence, for although Sanga, Thraso's cook, is a character in the *Eunuchus*, it is not in the rôle of cook but merely in that of servant. In the above-mentioned scene of *The Disobedient Child* we have reproduced the air of bustle, the recriminations of the cooks, the enumerations of the different kinds of meats which must be bought before the market be past. Similar scenes of the *Aulularia* and the *Pseudolus*² at once suggest themselves.

Nice Wanton, written during the reign of Edward VI., but printed in 1560, belongs to the same type, and is a homily on the text: "He that spareth the rod, the child doth hate." The story is of a son and a daughter, who, as a result of their mother's over-indulgence enter upon wicked courses. The son is eventually hanged, and the daughter dies of a loathsome disease. Their brother, a very exemplary young man, who has frequently given them many good counsels, prevents his mother from killing herself at the last, and addresses to her many reproaches and much good advice, reserving some of the latter, however, for the audience. The interlude is very short, and only occasionally is an approach made to effective portrayal of character. The Vice of the Moralities appears in the person of Iniquity, and the whole play represents but little progress beyond the standard of a much earlier period. Its relation to the cycle we have been considering, however, is clear. Brandl calls it "*eine deutliche Bearbeitung der Rebelles des niederländischen Rectors Macropedius, doch mit allerlei originellen Veränderungen.*"³

The History of Jacob and Esau, "a new mery and wittie Comedie or Interlude," was licensed in 1557-58, and printed in 1568. The plot is the Biblical story of Jacob's defrauding Esau of his birthright, but the comic element is emphasized by

¹ Page 281 ff.

² Cf., e.g., *Pseudolus*, Act I, Sc. ii, and Act III, Sc. ii; also, *Aulularia*, Act III, Scs. 1 and v.

³ *Op. cit.*, LXXII.

introducing non-Biblical characters. There is decidedly realistic portrayal of character and manners, and the moral purpose is only very mildly insisted on. The striving for reality is seen in the list of "The Parts and Names of the Players who are to be considered to be Hebrews and so should be appparelled with attire." The prologue gives the circumstances and events antecedent to the point at which the play opens, quite in the best style of the Latin comedy. How much the author has gained from his models is rather strikingly shown by the classical regularity of construction. A short analysis will make this clearer. Act I consists of four scenes. Sc. i presents to us the incorrigible Esau, who loves hunting, despises his stay-at-home brother, and abuses his servant. In Sc. ii we have a conversation between two of Isaac's old neighbors, who, while warmly approving of Jacob, indulge in gloomy forebodings as to the final result of Esau's wicked life. In Sc. iii the predilection of Rebekah for her younger son is brought out. She arranges with Jacob that in some way he shall buy his brother's birthright. In Sc. iv the characters are Isaac, Rebekah, and Mido—"the lad that leadeth blind Isaac." Rebekah tries to persuade her aged husband to give the blessing to Jacob rather than to Esau, but the old man steadfastly refuses:

The Lord after his way may change th' inheritance;
But I may not wittingly break our ordinance.

The whole situation is thus presented to us, the future complications are foreshadowed, and we have been introduced to all the important *dramatis personae*.

In Act II Esau, almost famished as a result of long enforced abstinence from food, sells his birthright to Jacob for "a mess of gross and homely pottage." But that this act will stir up dissension in the future we are warned by Esau's speech to his servant Ragan:

For if the time were come thinkest thou that Jacob
Should find Esau such a lout or such a lob
To suffer him to enjoy my birthright in rest?
Nay I will first toss him and trounce him of the best.

The second act then has introduced the elements of complication.

In Act III Esau visits his father, who commissions him to bring some venison, having eaten of which he will give him his

blessing. Rebekah, on learning this, despatches Jacob to kill two kids of the flock and so forestall his brother. The complication has now reached its height, and the drama has reached the climax of its development along the line thus far pursued.

In Act IV Jacob, with his mother's connivance, obtains his father's blessing by fraud, and the *dénouement* has begun.

In Act V Esau learns the deception that has been practised upon him. Jacob flees for safety into Mesopotamia, and Rebekah finally persuades Esau to give a promise (which he does not intend to keep) to forget his malice toward his brother. The play closes with a conventional moral epilogue by the Poet, and prayers for the clergy, the Queen, the Queen's councillors and the nobility.

I have analyzed this play thus at length in order to bring out the distance which the author has traveled from the playwrights of only a short time before. It is just in this matter of construction, as we have already seen, that the native drama had so much to learn from the classical. We have seen how the interludes of John Heywood, for example, presented real characters, and presented them forcibly; but his characterization was generally developed through the medium of a number of more or less loosely connected scenes which rarely rose to the dignity of a unified, organic whole. In *Jacob and Esau* we have likewise real characterization, and the original figure of the child Mido, with his naïve, artless prattle, stands out with particular clearness; but the author has learned in addition to build a fairly effective framework, which gives stability and unity to the whole. Only to a very slight extent are any of the external characteristics of Latin comedy present in the play.

*Misogonus*¹ so evidently belongs to the class of plays we are considering in this chapter that although the scene is laid in Italy, and it is just possible that the author was indebted to some Italian source for the story, its treatment rightly belongs to the division of our subject assigned to the dramas which were chiefly influenced by the movement from Germany. Its authorship is uncertain, having been variously assigned on insufficient evidence to Richard Edwards, Thomas Rychardes, and Robert Wilson. Professor Kittredge has recently examined the question and tells us that "the manuscript, which has

¹ Printed in Brandl's *Quellen des weltlichen Drama in England vor Shakespeare*, p. 419+.

preserved the play, is signed under the list of *dramatis personae*, 'Laurentius Bariona,' and this man Professor Kittredge is inclined to identify with Laurence Johnson, the author of a *Cometographia*.¹ The only manuscript in which the play is preserved—and this is a much mutilated one—bears the date 1577; the year 1560 has been generally accepted as the date of composition, but Professor Kittredge has shown clearly the insufficiency of the evidence in this case also. The plot is once more a variation of the story of the Prodigal Son. The play opens with a scene between Philogonus and his friend Eupelas, in which the former laments the riotous life led by his son Misogonus. An attempt on the part of Eupelas to restrain the ill life of the young man results disastrously, and the ambassador of peace escapes with difficulty from the attack of Misogonus's servants, whose master rates them soundly for this miscarriage of his plans. We next meet the young *roué* disporting with Melissa (*meretrix*), and so lavish of his money is he that a whole hogsheaf of the best muscadine is ordered. One of the servants is sent to fetch Sir John, the parish priest, who joins the party in games of cards and dice, and will not desist even when his clerk comes to tell him that it is time for evening service. Cacurgus, the fool, a sort of Ambidexter, who keeps on friendly terms with Philogonus, as well as with his reprobate son, brings the former, Eupelas, and an honest old servant, Liturgus, to witness the scene of revelry. In the third act Philogonus learns from a tenant, named Codrus, that Misogonus is not his only son—that his wife had given birth to twins, and had sent one of them secretly into Apolonia. Codrus's wife, Alison, having confirmed this story, Liturgus is despatched to bring home the long-lost brother—Eugonus by name. He arrives, and is recognized by several women who had been present at the time of his birth, and who know him by the fact that he has an extra toe on one of his feet. Misogonus, finally deserted by his servants, becomes repentant, and is forgiven by his father. While the story would seem to be thus concluded, the whole of the fifth act is missing.

The scene of the play is laid in Italy, but the whole atmosphere is English. St. Paul's weathercock is mentioned, and references to the social and religious life of contemporary England abound. The author seems to have been familiar

¹ V. *Journal of Germanic Philology*, Vol. III, No. 3, 1901, p. 335.

with the comedy of *Ralph Roister Doister*; we have the expression "a good mery greke,"¹ and one of the characters bears the name of Madge Mumblecrust, which leads Brandl to surmise that *auch für die Ausmalung des Gesindes mag dem Dichter diese stark nationalisierte Plautusnachbildung vorgeschweben haben*.²

The chief departure from the Biblical story of the Prodigal Son—the very language of which is imitated in at least one passage³—consists in the fact that the upright son is unknown till near the close of the play, and that instead of resenting his brother's conduct he is eager to be on friendly terms with him. On this point Brandl says: *Woher die Anregung zu dieser Figur stammen mag war mir lange räthselhaft*, and then rejecting the superficial similarity to be found in plays like the *Menaechmi*, *Captivi*, and *Poenulus*, he propounds the theory of a correspondence between certain scenes of Ariosto's *I Suppositi* and the *Misogonus*. On this point I have not been able to feel the cogency of Professor Brandl's argument even in the slightest. In the first place he does not elucidate at all the point which has been to him *lange räthselhaft*, nor, secondly, has he established any real correspondence between the two plays. In the scene of the *I Suppositi*, cited by him, we have to do with the case of a father, Filogano, who has come to visit his son, Erostrato. On arriving at the house of the latter the old man is refused ingress, and finds that a guest of the house announces himself as the father of Erostrato, and calls himself Filogano. Furthermore when the owner of the house appears, Filogano recognizes in him the servant of his son parading under the name of the latter. The father is at once filled with fears as to what may have been the fate of his son, and in his perplexity asks advice of his companion, and beseeches God to do justice. In *Misogonus* there is no such complication. The son flouts his father to his face and refuses to give up his evil life. Whereupon Philogonus demands of his friend Eupelas:

Did you ere here of man in more miserye than I?

Eupelas comforts him and advises him "to trust in Christ Jhesus alone," and Philogonus warmly agrees that this advice

¹ Act II, Sc. iv, v. 121.

² *Op. cit.*, LXXIX.

³ Cf., e.g., Act IV, Sc. v, v. 43 ff.

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² *Op. cit.*, LXXIX.

³ Cf., e.g., Act IV, Sc. v, v. 43 ff.

or indulge: Phylosarchus having been flogged for fornication in the city of Calvin; and his brother executed for murder in Calvinist Heidelberg. The two younger sons, meantime, by a coincidence not infrequent in stories of this type, have reached distinction and influence in the same quarters;—the one as a minister at Geneva, the other as secretary to the Palsgrave.”

As to the origin of the *Glasse of Government*, Professor Herford has shown almost to a certainty its connection with the general dramatic cycle the great representatives of which are the *Acolastus*, *Studentes*, and *Rebelles*.¹ Moreover, we know that not only had these plays a considerable vogue in England, but that in 1572-73 Gascoigne visited Holland in a military capacity. The whole atmosphere of the piece is that presented by Plautus and Terence. “A brief examination of the play,” says Professor Herford, “shows that it was written like the *Acolastus* with a very vivid recollection of Roman comedy.”² The fact that the author in the prologue denies the connection, affirming that he presents

No Terence phrase; his time and mine are twain;
The verse that pleased a Roman's rash intent
Might well offend the godly Preacher's vein,

if significant at all, is significant to the establishing of the relationship. Such condemnation of the ancient comedy was common in its imitators, and in the present case the author's admiration of the Latin drama, in one particular at least, appears in the admission of Gnomaticus to his pupils that “out of Terence may also be gathered many morall enstruptions amongst the rest of his wanton discourses.” The stock characters of the procuress Pandarina, the courtesan Lamia, and the parasite Eccho, are pictured as quite of the same species as those of Plautus. Eccho, though serving in the capacity of servant to the courtesan, has the true parasite's love of gorging,³ and shows a supreme indifference to all notions of loyalty to his mistress. “When the Crowes feet groweth under her eye, why then no more adoe, but ensineuate thy selfe with such another.” Of Lamia we see little, but she appears attractive, and is genuinely in love with Phylosarchus, so much so that Eccho, noticing that she is becoming emaciated and pale, is led

¹ For detailed comparison, v. Herford, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 160.

³ See Act IV, Sc. v.

to exclaim: "Fye, fie, what meaneth she? . . . She beareth but evill in remembraunce the good documentes of that vertuous olde Lady her Aunte." The latter is very little in evidence, but is apparently quite of the type of those of her profession presented in the *Cistellaria* and *Curculio*. The conversation of the servants, Dick Droom and Eccho, relative to the preparation of the banquet,¹ suggests similar scenes in Plautus. Whipping scenes and references to them; Eccho's sentence: "Carrie him to the mill and there let him be whipped every day thrice"; the rewarding of Fidus, the faithful slave of Phylopaes, by giving him his liberty,—all recall at once stock situations of Roman comedy. It is interesting to note that Ambidexter, the Vice, is brought upon the stage as a character.

We have thus concluded a brief survey of the chief English dramatic pieces upon which Plautus and Terence exercised an influence through the medium of the Latin plays of the German Humanists. This influence has not shown itself in the adaptation of any particular play of the Latin comedy-writers. Only stock characters and situations have been reproduced, now almost literally, now with a change. The chief effect of this movement, together with that of the study of Plautus and the representation of plays in the schools, which we noticed in the last chapter, is of such a nature that it is difficult to lay one's finger on special passages. It consisted in teaching the English playwrights how to give real unity to their productions, to combine accurate delineation of character with skillful development of plot, and to dispose the material of a play in the most effective manner possible. In a word, Englishmen learned dramatic technique from the study and imitation of Latin comedy, and in this way was shortened—by how long a period we can only speculate—the time which must have elapsed between the perfecting of the interlude of the type of Heywood's pieces and the birth of legitimate comedy.

¹ See Act IV, Scs. iii and v.

CHAPTER VI

THE INFLUENCE FROM ITALY

The impulse which ended in the Renaissance of learning, not only for England but for European countries in general, had originated in Italy,—the storehouse of the monuments of ancient greatness. The wealth of literary treasure which she possessed had been equaled only by the enthusiasm with which it was utilized, and the honor in which it was held. And though England had come to share in the newly-found riches at a period when the attraction of novelty had, in part, passed away for the scholars of France and Italy, it was still from Italy that she drank in the larger inspiration rather than through any intermediate channel. The great literary movement of the first half of the century had been an eminently normal one. For Englishmen the Renaissance had been a renaissance of learning, a re-acquiring of thorough and appreciative acquaintance with the literary classics of antiquity; but great as was the devotion paid to the works of the past, it was never so complete or so headlong as to result in the eradication of national ideals or the complete substitution of foreign models. How radically the development of the English drama was modified by the fact that the playwrights had come to know and admire the drama of Rome we have already seen in part. But it was a modification, the healthy, normal action of a potent influence, not the contemptuous desertion of indigenous models to make way for the establishment of a foreign drama. In Italy it had been different. The classical literature, especially the Latin drama, had met with a reception so devoted and uncritical that it had effected, not a modification of the Italian representations, but a complete revolution. We have noticed how enthusiastically the study of Plautus was resumed, and how frequently his plays and those of his imitators were placed upon the boards. For example, in 1502 when Lucrezia Borgia came to Ferrara as the bride of Alfonso d'Este, part of the wedding festivities consisted in the representation of five different plays of Plautus—the *Epidicus*, *Bacchides*, *Miles Gloriosus*, *Asinaria*,

and *Casina*—on as many successive days. Ariosto's *I Suppositi* was played in 1519 in the theatre which had been built by the pope, and Leo himself was one of the most interested spectators. The *sacre rappresentazioni*, though they long continued to be acted and printed, fell into contempt, and the models of Latin comedy reigned supreme. Even the most pronounced of later developments remained in close relation to this standard, and consisted chiefly in a loose adaptation of the picturing of contemporary social life to the demands made by the mould and essential characteristics of the plays of Plautus and Terence. This tendency toward independent development was carried farthest by Aretino, who laughs at the unities and some of what he considered the more absurd conventions by which natural, direct expression was shackled, and portrays his characters in a series of vigorous, pointed scenes, which together make up a sadly disjointed, amorphous product. But even in Aretino's drama, although it pictures faithfully contemporary life, and is clothed in vigorous, terse, original language, we are still close to the world of Latin comedy. One explanation of this may be found in the parallel suggested by Mr. Symonds between the conditions of life prevailing in Greece at the time of the New Comedy, and in Italy at the period we are discussing. Another reason is doubtless to be found in the fact that both Plautus and Aretino picture society largely from the point of view of the lower classes, and with a frankness and lack of reserve which is often the veriest vulgarity. In the *farsa* Italy had a native growth similar to that of England, but instead of contributing to the building up of a national drama it became atrophied and dead. In the words of Mr. Symonds: "Plautus and Terence, Ariosto and Macchiavelli, not nature, were their sources of inspiration. Mistakes between two brothers, confusions of sex, discoveries that poor girls are the lost daughters of princely parents form the staple of their plots."¹

Italian literature had come to exercise a strong influence over Englishmen by the beginning of the third decade of the century. Wyatt died in 1542, and Surrey in 1547, and their names are remembered as those of the leaders in one of the greatest movements which have marked the course of our literature. The Petrarchan lyric had been planted in English soil,

¹ *Italian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 122.

and had flourished vigorously, and the sonnet and blank verse had become acquisitions of English literary workers. It was somewhat later that the Italian drama began to attract the attention of Englishmen, though unfortunately our information on this subject is not as accurate as could be wished. Many of the names of plays which are now lost suggest their connection with Italian scenes or plots. But we have the positive statement of Arthur Brooke, when in 1562 he printed a poetical translation of Bandello's story of *Romeo and Juliet*, that a play bearing the same name had been represented before that date. In the next year Robert Wilmot produced his *Tancred and Gismunda*, based on the story related by Boccaccio. In 1566 the first volume of Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* appeared, and the second volume in the succeeding year. It met with immediate and wonderful success; in 1569 was published a second edition of the first volume, and in 1575 the whole work was reprinted. In 1566 Gascoigne's translation of Ariosto's *I Suppositi* had been played at Gray's Inn, and the *Jocasta* (which is not directly from the Greek, but a literal translation of Dolce's play imitated from Seneca's version) appeared during the same year. How generally Italian literature was known in England at this period we learn from a passage in Ascham's *Schoolmaster*, written about 1568. "These be the enchantments of Circes, brought out of Italy, to mar men's manners in England; much by example of ill life, but more by precepts of fond books, of late translated out of Italian into English, sold in every shop in London; commended by honest titles, the sooner to corrupt honest manners; dedicated over-boldly to virtuous and honourable personages, the easilier to beguile simple and innocent wits."¹ "And that which is most to be lamented, and therefore more needful to be looked to, there be more of these ungracious books set out in print within these few months, than have been seen in England many score years before. And because our Englishmen made Italians cannot hurt but certain persons, and in certain places, therefore these Italian books are made English, to bring mischief enough openly and boldly to all states, great and mean, young and old, everywhere."² Ascham was evi-

¹ *Roger Ascham's Works*, Roger Giles ed., Vol. III, p. 157.

² *Op. cit.* p. 160.

dently a thorough believer in the old saying—*Inglese italianato e un diavolo incarnato*.

Toward the end of the century the acquaintance of Englishmen with Italian literature became much more extensive, as the translation of many of the greatest Italian classics testifies. Every student of Shakspeare is familiar with the importance of the works of the Italian *novellieri* as storehouses from which the plots of English plays were derived. Stephen Gosson, in his *Plays Confuted in Five Actions*, says: "I may boldly say it, because I have seen it, that the 'Palace of Pleasure,' 'The Golden Ass,' 'The Ethiopian History,' 'Amadis of France' and 'The Round Table,' bawdy comedies in Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish, have been thoroughly ransacked to furnish the play-houses in London."

It would be aside from our purpose to consider in detail the effect of Italian literature on the development of the English Romantic drama, though the *commedia dell' arte*, the pastoral drama, and the drama of intrigue, all probably played an important part. In the work of Aretino and his school, especially in their contempt for regularity of form and for the observance of the more artificial dramatic conventions, "Romantic" ideals had been already attained. But Italian comedy had remained persistently classical in spirit, even adopting the conventional characterization of its prototype, and it is with this influence of the Latin drama through the Italian that we are here concerned. Of many pieces it is difficult to speak positively. It is more than probable that the *Damon and Pithias* (1564-65?) of Richard Edwardes should be considered in this connection. In many places it bears the marks of contact with the ancient drama or some of its modern imitations. *Damon and Pithias* give thanks to Neptune for their safe journey on the sea—a frequent occurrence in Plautus. There is a beating scene and parasites play a considerable part, but they are simply cruel, grasping, faithless, and quite different from the hungry wretches of Plautus. The fact that the piece contains a mixture of comic and tragic scenes (it calls itself "a new tragical comedy"), and that in one place there is a time-gap of two months, at least suggest Italian influence in the "Romantic" direction, the term being here used not only in reference to structure, but to dramatic conventions in a more general way.

That this development of English drama was aided by Italian examples is practically certain,¹ and *Damon and Pithias* is quite probably one of the earliest examples. The scene of the *Misogonus* (which Fleay on very insufficient evidence believes to be the work of the same author), is laid in Italy, and there are other indications which make it probable that the plot was derived from an Italian source. But two dramas, both certainly drawn from Italian sources, and both showing the influence of Latin comedy in a marked degree, are of chief interest to us here,—*The Supposes*² and *Promos and Cassandra*.

The Supposes,³ a practically literal translation of Ariosto's *I Suppositi*, and the earliest extant specimen of an English prose comedy was the work of George Gascoigne, and was produced at Gray's Inn in 1566. Mr. Collier thinks that the author of the translation used the earlier prose version of Ariosto's work, while adopting some of the alterations to be found in the later verse form.⁴ *I Suppositi* may be taken as a representative of the perfect adaptation of Latin comedy to the portrayal of contemporary Italian life, and furnishes us in its English version a good example of the strongly classical influence which Italian dramatic literature was exercising on that of England. A short sketch of the play will make our observations more definite: Erostrato, son of Philogano, has come from Sicilia to Ferrara for the purpose of study. Falling in love with Polynesta, the daughter of Damon, he exchanges name, clothes, and station with his servant Dulipo, and takes service with the father of the young lady. The plan succeeds, and with the help of Balia the nurse he lives in the constant enjoyment of his mistress. Cleander, a wealthy and stupid old doctor, is a suitor for Polynesta's hand. Pasiphilo, a parasite, flatters him ridiculously in order to get invited to dinner, but is equally ready to serve the feigned Erostrato, who by this means learns of all Cleander's movements. He reports to his master that Cleander is about to marry Polynesta, whereupon the lover is ready to faint away. The resourceful slave, how-

¹ Cf. Ward, *Hist. Eng. Dram. Lit.*, Vol. I, p. 210.

² *The Supposes* was one of the direct sources of Shakspeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. For the relation of Shakspeare's play to its original, v. *Shakspeare's Part in "The Taming of the Shrew,"*—A. H. Tolman in *Mod. Lang. Pub.*, Vol. V, No. 4, 1890.

³ Roxburghe Library edition (1869), *The Complete Poems of George Gascoigne*, ed. Hazlitt, Vol. I, p. 199.

⁴ Collier, *Hist. Eng. Poet.*, III, p. 6.

ever, revives him by the recital of his plans. The previous evening he had met an old gentleman from Scienna, and had persuaded him that there was great danger in being found in Ferrara, on account of a recent quarrel between the two cities. Accordingly he had offered to shelter the old man in his house, and had instructed him to call himself Philogano, father of Erostrato. The plan of the wily servant is to make this feigned father give security for his son's wealth to the father of Polynesta. A servant's quarrel betrays to Damon the manner of his daughter's life, and he casts her lover into prison, still believing him to be merely one of his household attendants. Meanwhile the true Philogano has arrived to visit his son. On proceeding to the house of the latter he is refused entrance by the servant, who declares that his master's father is within. The old man from Scienna appears on the scene, and when Philogano protests that he is Erostrato's father, the cook at length drives him off. When the feigned Erostrato appears, Philogano at once recognizes in him Dulipo, and is filled with fear as to the fate of his son. Dulipo, however, brazens out the part he has to play, and Philogano finally determines to apply to Cleander for help. A result of this is the discovery that Dulipo is the long-lost son of Cleander, who had been taken prisoner by the Turks at the capture of Otranto, and later bought by Philogano. The recognition is made complete by the fact that Dulipo has known his mother's name, and had a mole on his left shoulder. The explanation and happy conclusion follow swiftly. The real Erostrato is to marry Polynesta with the consent of both Damon and Philogano, while Cleander, rejoicing in his son so unexpectedly found, withdraws his claims to the young woman, and gives his blessing to his rival.

The origin of the plot is fairly clear. Erostrato's changing places with his servant in order to arrive at the enjoyment of his mistress is imitated from the *Eunuchus* of Terence, though with a difference, while the self-sacrifice and devotion of the young slave, who turns out to be a freeman and the son of a wealthy father, is practically the situation presented in the *Captivi* of Plautus. The flouting and driving away of Philogano from his son's house suggests the similar scene in the *Amphitruo*, where the master is driven from his own house as an impostor. To connect the plot with that of the *Menaech-*

mi, however, as Reinhardstoettner does¹ is not admissible, for the mistaken identity on which the whole similarity rests is common to a number of Plautus's dramas. The whole air of the piece is purely that of the world of Roman comedy. In Pasiphilo we have the greedy parasite who flatters, seeks diners, and is the friend of whichever rival will feed him. The clever, intriguing servant manages everything, while his master sits down and bemoans his lot, begging his slave to revive him; the latter is a man of infinite resource and addresses his master in a tone of half-respectful superiority.² Many references or situations may also be paralleled in Plautus, e.g., the references to the exactions of custom-house officers,³ the knocking at the gate until it is almost broken down,⁴ the parasite's superintending the preparations in the kitchen,⁵ the cook's enumeration of dishes,⁶ the reference to escape from shipwreck.⁷ The discovery of the long-lost child by the inevitable mole on the left shoulder is frequently met with in Plautus, and the central comic principle, viz., the mistaking of one person for another owing to some thin disguise, is perhaps the commonest of comic motifs in the ancient drama. The frequent directions for improvisation may perhaps be considered as one of the features of Italian drama derived from the *commedia dell' arte*, now first introduced into England. In later English plays such a practice was by no means uncommon,—we have an example in *The Birthe of Hercules*—and there can be little doubt as to its origin.

Promos and Cassandra,⁸ from which Shakspeare took the plot of *Measure for Measure*, was printed in 1578, and was founded on a novel from *La Seconda Parte degli Hecatommithi di M. Giovanbatista Giraldis Cinthio*. The source of the Plautine influence upon the play, which, as we shall see, was comparatively slight, it is not possible to locate. The author, George Whetstone, may have incorporated the Latin characteristics as a result of his direct acquaintance with the

¹ Reinhardstoettner, *Plautus*, p. 332.

² Cf., e.g., the similar relations between Pseudolus and Calidorus in the *Pseudolus*.

³ Cf. the similes in *Asinaria*, Act I, *passim*. Also, cf. reference in *Trinummus*, toward end of Act III, Sc. iv.

⁴ Cf. *Mostellaria*, Act II, Sc. i.

⁵ Cf. *Captivi*, Act IV, Sc. iii, and Act V, Sc. i.

⁶ Cf. *Captivi*, Act IV, Sc. ii.

⁷ Cf. *Trinummus*, Act IV, Sc. i, and *Mostellaria*, Act II, Sc. i.

⁸ *Shakspeare's Library*, ed. Hazlitt, Vol. VI.

works of Plautus, or he may have been influenced by that very Italian drama the effect of which in England he so much deprecated. Whetstone was a warm admirer of classic regularity in the drama, and had an intense dislike of the "Romantic" vagaries in which he saw most of the writers of his time indulging. In an introductory letter to his friend, William Fleetwoode, he expounds his views—not dissimilar from those of Sidney—adding one more unavailing obstacle to the progress of the mighty stream of tendency which was about to reconstruct the dramatic ideals of the world. The play is presented in two parts, "for that, Decorum used, it would not be conveyde in one." Speaking of his moral purpose in writing the play, the author says: "And to these ends: Menander Plautus and Terence, themselves many yeares since intombd (by their Commedies) in honour, live at this daye. The auncient Romanes heald these showes of suche prise, that they not onely allowde the publike exercise of them, but the grave Senators themselves countenaunced the Actors with their presence: who from these trifles wonne moralltye, as the Bee suckes the honny from weedes. But the advised devises of auncient Poets, discredited, with the tryfels of yonge, unadvised and rashe witted wryters, hath brought this commendable exercise in mislike. For at this daye, the Italian is so lascivious in his commedies, that honest hearers are greeved at his actions: the Frenchman and Spaniarde folowes the Italians humor: the Germaine is too holye: for he presentes on everye common Stage, what Preachers should pronounce in Pulpets. The Englishman in this quallitie, is most vaine, indiscreete, and out of order: he fyrst groundes his worke on impossibilities: then in three howers roames he throwe the worlde: marryes, gets Children, makes Children men, men to conquer Kingdomes, murder monsters, and bringeth Gods from Heaven, and fetcheth Divels from Hel. And (that which is worst) their ground is not so unperfect, as their working indiscreete: not waying, so the people laugh, though they laugh them (for theyr folleys) to scorne: Manye tymes (to make mirth) they make a Clowne companion with a Kinge: in theyr grave Counsels, they allow the advise of fooles: yea, they use one order of speach for all persons: a grose Indecorum, for a Crowe, will yll counterfet the nightingales sweete voice: even so affected speache doth misbecome a Clowne. For to work a Commedie kindly,

grave olde men, should instruct: yonge men should showe the imperfections of youth: Strumpets should be lascivious: Boyes unhappy: and Clownes, should be disorderly: entermingling all these actions, in such sorte, as the grave matter, may instruct; and the pleasant, delight: for without this chaunge, the attention, would be small: and the likinge, lesse."

That Whetstone was a thorough-going admirer of the classics, and of classical ideals in the way of dramatic work, is very clear, and it is no less evident that he was fully alive to the importance of the change which was working itself out in the English drama of his time. It is not improbable that it was as an example of what he considered a true play that he wrote *Promos and Cassandra*, for it certainly had not been acted several years after appearing in print, and as far as we know has never attained that honor. The action is slow and wearisome, especially in the second part, and the author's success in preserving "Decorum" has evidently made it impossible for him to incorporate more desirable qualities. Although the play announces itself as "divided into two Commical Discourses" the comic part forms only a very small portion of the whole, unless indeed the author used the term in reference to the "happy ending" of the play. The relation to Latin comedy consists only in the scenes which deal with Lamia, the courtesan, and the characters who centre about her. The opening speech which she makes at the beginning of the play at once proclaims her the stock courtesan and procuress in one. A maid and man-servant report to her, the latter of whom is closely related to the stock parasite—being chiefly concerned as to the getting of his daily bread. Lamia gloats over the fact that she lives in such luxury, and as to the question of who pays for it,

Thou thy selfe? No the rushing Youthes that bathe in wanton blisse,
Yea, olde and doating fooles sometimes, doo helpe to paye for this.

Her absolutely unfeeling selfishness is constantly exemplified. The scene in which the maid-servant, Dalia, is going to market to prepare for a dinner (Part I, Act IV, Sc. i) is very suggestive of the general situation of which Plautus has numerous variations. Dalia is very similar to her mistress and dispenses her favors only for a money consideration. Slight as is the part played by these characters their origin is perfectly apparent,

and the mention of Menander, Plautus, and Terence in the introductory letter is unnecessary to direct us to their comedies for the prototypes of certain scenes of *Promos and Cassandra*.

We have already noticed that the Plautine-Terentian drama of Italy exercised its influence upon the Latin plays produced in the English universities: From no other source, indeed, did these plays derive so many of their plots and leading characteristics. In the article already quoted on this subject, after a reference to the *ausserordentlich reiche Ausbildung* of the Plautine-Terentian comedy in Italy, we are told that *unter den Universitätsstücken finden wir manche Bearbeitung eines italienischen Vorbildes*.¹ In the two well-known school comedies—the *Bellum Grammaticale* and the *Paedantius* (both of which are mentioned by Sir John Harrington in his *Apology for Poetry*, 1591) we have clear traces of the influence of Roman comedy, though it is not clear whether this influence was communicated through an Italian or a German medium. In the *Bellum Grammaticale* Ille and Ubique are the hungry parasites, and each mocks the other with regard to his insatiable appetite. In the *Paedantius*² we have a parasite and a maid who has to be bought from her master, while the central purpose of the author is to laugh at the pedantry, shallowness, and vanity of the schoolmaster. We thus have a picture which recalls the similar one in the *Bacchides* of Plautus. Of the plays which are derived directly from Italian imitations of Roman comedy the following are the chief:—³

Laelia,⁴ which was played at Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1590, and again in 1598, is *eine lateinische Bearbeitung der Ingannati*. The heroine wears male attire and takes service with her lover in order to overcome the obstacles in the way of their passion for each other. (Compare the situation in *I Suppositi* or the *Eunuchus*.) The general atmosphere rather than any particular situation of Roman comedy is reproduced. In the words of the author of the article before referred to, *Das Lustspiel ist im allgemeinen Plautinisch*. The play concludes:

*Honoratissimi viri, honoratissimi inquam et gravissimi viri
Cum meo Cicerone plausum date Vel potius cum Plauto, plaudite.*

¹ *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 271.

² *Ibid.*, p. 276.

³ For synopses of the plays v. *op. cit.*

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 291.

Silvanus,¹ which was played at Cambridge in 1596, contains, we are told, *viele meist wörtliche Nachahmungen von Seneca, auch von Plautus*.

*Hispanus*² was also played at Cambridge in the same year. It is the stock situation—the difficulty of getting possession of a mistress—and both the slaves and the hungry parasite play their parts. *Dass die Komödie voll Plautinischer Nachahmung ist geht aus ihrem Inhalt klar hervor. Diktion und Humor stammen zum grössten Theile daher.*^{3,2}

Leander,³ which was first played in 1598, is derived from Giovanni Battista della Porta's comedy *La Fantescia*, which was printed at Venice in 1592.

Labyrinthus,⁴ preserved to us in the same MS., and played in 1602, may possibly have been written a little earlier. It takes its plot from *La Cintia*, another comedy by della Porta.

In both the above plays the central motif is the attempt to get possession of a mistress. In both much of the complication is due to the disguise effected by changing clothes. In both there are scenes in which the servant is severely beaten by his master. In *Labyrinthus* we have the hungry parasite.

*Zelotypus*⁵ was probably played between 1600 and 1603, and is derived from some unknown Italian source. Here we have the stock characters of hungry parasite, *leno*, *lena*, and *meretrices*. The husband pretends to go into the country, but really remains to spy upon his wife; cf. the somewhat similar situation in the *Mercator*.⁶ The wife, who is innocent, complains that her husband tortures her more than Amphytruo did Alcmena.

It is, perhaps, worth while to notice that the author of *Hymenaeus* (a play which is apparently quite unrelated to Roman comedy) justifies his taking a plot from Boccaccio by the example of Terence: *haec a Bocatii fabula longe magis est alia quam a Colace Menandri Eunuchus Terentii*.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 294.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 300.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 303.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 308.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 313.

⁶ *Mercator*, Act IV, Sc. iii.

In the development of early English dramatic literature the influence of Italian plays was thrown on the side of the new Romantic comedy, and of the English plays which we have considered in this chapter *Promos and Cassandra* was produced in direct protest against the new movement. But with the beginning of the last decade of the century, when classical drama once more revived, there can be no doubt that the reactionary movement, initiated by the direct study of the classics, was largely aided by the acquaintance which Englishmen had attained with Italian dramas informed with the same spirit.

CHAPTER VII

SHAKSPERE'S PREDECESSORS

Italian literature, then, was exercising a strong influence over that of England at this period. Collections of Italian novels were the storehouses from which many dramatists derived their plots, the great epics of Italy were translated and widely read in England, and Italian dramas were both translated and imitated. The preponderating weight of the influence of Italian literature was not on the side of the classics. The history of the period from 1580 to 1590 is the history of the early growth of the Romantic drama, and although the ancient models were not ignored, it is rather surprising how little effect they had on the dramatic work of men whose training had been derived from one or other of the great universities. Examples are by no means lacking, however, especially in the period immediately preceding the beginning of the ninth decade of the century, of plays which clearly enough bear the marks of contact with Latin comedy. Frequently the effect of this contact was very slight, as in the case of a number of plays which do not fall under the heading of any previous chapter and which we may briefly refer to here, before considering the plays of Lyly.

Appius and Virginia, which was printed in 1575, though probably acted as early as 1563, and which is more of a Morality than a historical play, contains distinct suggestions of the ancient comedy. Compare, for example, the slave's anticipation of a beating¹ with any one of the numerous similar reflections of the slaves of Plautus. *The Marriage of Wit and Science* (licensed 1569-70), the five acts of which are regularly divided into scenes, contains a suggestion of the motif of the *Amphitruo*, viz., one of the characters being in doubt as to his own identity.² The *Tancred and Gismunda* of Robert Wilmot, which was produced in 1568, and which was revived in an altered form and printed in 1591, contains a reference to the

¹ Hazlitt's Dodsley, Vol. IV., pp. 121-123.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 379.

story of the *Amphitruo*, not necessarily, of course, but probably derived from Plautus:

To me the king of gods and men doth yield
As witness can

The doubled night, the sun's restrained course,
His secret stealths, the slander to eschew,
In shape transform'd, we list not to discourse,
All that and more we forced him to do.¹

In the *Cambises* of Thomas Preston, entered on the Stationers' Register in 1569-70, we have the figure of the "miles gloriosus" presented in Ruff, Huff, and Snuff, who, however, are not necessarily of the family of Pyrgopolinices or Thraso. A *meretrix* scene presents also another stock character of Latin comedy.² *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (1581) contains at least one stock situation of Plautus—a cudgeling scene,³ and one stock character,—Penulo, the parasite, who in his faithfulness to his master and his duplicity toward all others resembles the faithful slave so commonly met with in the works of the Roman playwrights.)

The only author of the period whose works show the influence of the Latin comedy to any marked degree is John Lyly. Like Greene he could write himself *utriusque academiae in artibus magister*, and his dramas abound in classical allusion and quotation. Many of the figures of classic myth appear as characters in his works. Though his knowledge of the ancient authors was not very extensive Mr. Ward has pointed out that "he was in various ways and degrees indebted in style and in manner to Ovid, Virgil, and Homer, and to Caesar, Cicero, and Seneca."⁴ There can be little doubt that the easy colloquial prose style which constitutes his chief contribution to the development of comic drama owes something to his familiarity with the best examples of Latin colloquial prose, viz., the comedies of Plautus and Terence. Several of his plays contain mere allusions to some character or situation of Latin comedy. Sir Tophas, the "miles gloriosus" of *Endimion*,⁵ has been regarded as a lineal descendant of Pyrgopolinices,⁶ and it

¹ Hazlitt's Dodsley, Vol. VII, pp. 28-29, Act J. Sc. j.

² Hazlitt's Dodsley, Vol. IV, p. 181 seq.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 181-82.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 277.

⁵ *The Dramatic Works of John Lyly*, ed. Fairholt, 1858, Vol. I.

⁶ Cf., e.g., Ward's *Eng. Dram. Lit.*, Vol. I, p. 284.

is more than probable that Lyly had the hero of Plautus's play in mind. Sir Tophas's falling in love with the ugly Dipsas may have been suggested by the last ridiculous situation in which Pyrgopolinices is placed. But it is well to remember that the tendency to find Plautus imitation wherever the braggart soldier is portrayed is a very misleading one. In the present case it is at least certain that *Thersites* furnished the prototype of Sir Tophas to a much greater degree than did the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus, and we have already concluded that the hero of the English farce bears no relation to that of the Latin play. The purely farcical portraiture of Sir Tophas, together with the fact that he must be active to a considerable extent in displaying to us his character, since he has no convenient parasite on whom to depend, differentiates him at once from the hero of Latin comedy. When he assures us: "Commonly my words wound," and when he refers to "the ugly beast, the blackbird," "the terrible trout," and announces himself as about to combat with "the monster Ovis"—a black sheep—we are at once reminded of *Thersites* and his encounter with a snail. The idea of making the hero ridiculous in love is probably drawn from Plautus, but surely little more than the idea. Sir Tophas is at first adamant, his valor leaving no place for love; Pyrgopolinices is amorous from the beginning, and proud of his easy conquest of all feminine hearts. When Sir Tophas does fall in love it is with the ugly Dipsas, and he argues that old women, like old wine, are best; Pyrgopolinices' discomfiture is the result of deception, which has been practised upon him, and he is called upon to play no such purely farcical rôle as that in which Sir Tophas reveals himself. In *Endimion* the scenes relating to Sir Tophas are almost entirely unconnected with the general plot except at the close, and even then only in the most artificial way. In Act V, Sc. ii, the enumeration of dishes at the banquet recalls similar lists in Plautus, and the same act contains one quotation from the *Miles Gloriosus*¹—viz., *O lepidum caput!* The last line of Act III, Sc. iii, viz., *I prae sequar*, is the last line of the *Andria*, Act I, Sc. i.)

In *Campaspe* we have a suggestion of one of the stock characters of Latin comedy in the figure of *Lais*, the courtesan,

¹ *Miles Gloriosus*, III, i, 131. Professor Baker is wrong in assigning this quotation to the *Mostellaria*. V. his edition of *Endymion*, p. 89.

who, however, does little but rail against war, which deprives men of the pleasures of peace. She also directs a few words of scorn to Diogenes. The play contains two references to the story of the *Amphitruo*. The first is in the prologue, and consists of a single line—"There went two nights to the begetting of Hercules." In Act III, Sc. i, Apelles, the painter, is showing Campaspe his pictures:

Apel.—This is Alcmena, unto whom Jupiter came in shape of Amphitruon, her husband, and begate Hercules.

Camp.—A famous sonne, but an infamous fact.

Apel.—He might doe it, because he was a God.

Camp.—Nay, therefore it was evill done, because he was a God.

Quite frequently in Lyly's plays the ready wit or resourceful cleverness of some character recalls vaguely a similar character of Latin comedy. In the words of Professor Baker: "His pages and nimble-witted youngsters are very clever, and stand between the audacious and mendacious slaves and boys of Plautus and Terence, and the wags and wits of Shakespeare."¹ But in *Mother Bombe*, printed in 1594, we have a comedy—almost certainly one of the author's latest plays—in which the typical situations of Latin comedy have been brought together in such a manner that it would not be difficult to imagine the play as a transcript of some lost comedy of Plautus.² The plot, as related by two of the characters—Riscio and Dromio—in Act V, Sc. iii, and amplified by Professor Ward,³ I give here:

"*Memphio* had a foole to his sonne, which *Stellio* knew not; *Stellio* a foole to his daughter, unknowne to *Memphio*; to coosen each other they dealt with their boies [i.e., servants] for a match [in other words, they tried with the help of their servants, each to palm off his foolish child upon the supposed sensible child of the other]; wee [the servants] met with Lucio and Halfepeenie [two other serving-men] who told the love betweene their master's children [Accius and Silena], the youth deeply in love, the fathers unwitting to consent . . . then wee foure met, which argued wee were no mountaines; and in a taverne wee met, which argued wee were mortall; and everie one in his wine told his dayes worke, which was a signe wee forgot not our businesse; and seeing all our masters troubled with devises, we determined a little to trouble the

¹ *Lyly's Endymion*, ed. Baker, p. cxxxvi (Henry Holt & Co., 1894).

² *Eng. Dram. Lit.*, Vol. I, p. 300.

water before they drunke; so that in the attire of your children, our masters' wise children bewrayed their good nature [i.e., proved themselves the fools they were]; and in the garments of our masters' children yours made a marriage; this all stood upon us poore children, and your young children, to shew that old folkes may be overtaken by children.'

"To which it has only to be added that the two foolish children, Accius and Silena, in the end turn out to be brother and sister, changelings foisted upon Memphio and Stellio by Vicina, who has brought up their actual children, Maestius and Serena, as her own, and as brother and sister, and has thus impeded the solution which satisfies the actual state of the case."¹

The correspondence with stock situations of Roman comedy is sufficiently evident. Memphio will send his wife to his country-house in order that she may not disarrange his plans. Compare this with the *Mercator*, Act IV, Sc. iii, where Dorippa suddenly returning from the country overturns the arrangements of Lysimachus, her husband. The love affairs of the son are furthered by the clever servant contrary to the wishes of the father, who is deceived throughout.² The marriage of the foolish son and daughter—each to a supposedly sane person—is made possible, and the fathers are to be completely hoodwinked, by the simple expedient of changing clothes.³ The motif of the long-lost children found at last, and in love, so that they are happy ever afterwards is a common one in Plautus.⁴ In *Mother Bombie*, as very generally in Latin comedy, the distinguishing mark by which both the children are recognized, is a mole. The regular reward of the clever intriguing servant who has carried through his master's schemes to a successful issue, viz., that he be given his liberty, or at least some great favor,⁵ is likewise granted in Lyly's play. The idea of a proposed marriage being frustrated by the discovery that the contracting parties are in reality brother and sister finds a parallel in the situation presented in the *Epidicus*. In a word, almost every important situation of the whole play, except those which deal with the old woman who gives the comedy its name, may be paralleled in the work of Plautus.

¹ Ward, *Hist. Eng. Dram. Lit.*, Vol. I, p. 300.

² Cf. the similar situations in *Mercator*, *Epidicus*, etc.

³ Cf. the similar situations in *Eunuchus*, *Casina*, *Captivi*, etc.

⁴ Cf. the similar situations in *Poenulus* and *Rudens*.

⁵ Cf. the similar situations in *Pseudolus*, *Epidicus*, *Stichus*, etc.

It has been already stated that Latin comedy exercised but little influence on the English drama of the period between 1580 and 1590. It was not by any means because Plautus and Terence had fallen into oblivion; occasional suggestions in the plays themselves and frequent references to the Latin playwrights or some of their characters in the non-dramatic works of the period abundantly testify to the familiarity of the authors with this branch of classical literature. In the introduction to his edition of the *Endymion* Professor Baker says: "Moreover if the intentionally amusing scenes of Lyly are compared with those in other plays from 1580 to 1590 it will at once appear that in most of the plays of other writers, the comedy, where it is not a somewhat clumsy copy of scenes in Plautus or Terence, is coarseness or horse-play."¹ Of coarseness and horse-play there is indeed plenty, but it is almost impossible to point out scenes in any play written during the decade—except those of Lyly—which may be called even clumsy copies of Plautus or Terence. The explanation is to be found in the surprising strength which was suddenly attained by the new Romantic drama. Lyly's works smacked very slightly of Latin comedy till near the close of his career as a writer of plays, and we shall have occasion to note how *Mother Bombie* takes its place as an early example of the reactionary movement which began with the first years of the last decade of the century, and which, under the protection of its great high priest, Ben Jonson, was to go on side by side with the dominant Romantic drama, and to produce some of the minor classics of English literature.

At no previous period had the interest in the works of Greece and Rome been greater than in the decade we are considering. The works of writers in every department of literature abound in references to the writings or myths of the ancient world, and translators of the classics² were placed quite on a level with the authors of original works. Nor in this universal enthusiasm for classical literature was the drama of Rome forgotten. In 1575 and 1581 new and enlarged editions of Udall's selections from Terence were issued by John Higgins. In 1581 a complete edition of all the previously translated

¹ *Lyly's Endymion*, ed. Baker, p. clxxxv.

² For list of translations made at this period v. Warton, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 281 seq.

single plays of Seneca was printed under the title: *Seneca his tenne Tragedies translated into Englysh. Mercurii Nutrices horae. 1581.* The interest bestowed on many of these works is attested by the fierceness of the denunciations showered on them by their opponents. Prynne tells us that the Puritan leaders of Elizabeth's reign forbade all Christians "to pen, to print, to sell, to read, or schoole-masters and others to teach, any amorous wanton Play-bookes, Histories, or Heathen authors, especially Ovids wanton Epistles and Bookes of Love, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Martial, the comedies of Plautus, Terence and other such amorous bookes . . ."¹ Stephen Gosson, in his *School of Abuse*, rails against Latin comedy in general, and has a contemptuous reference to "some Arch-player or other that hath read a little or stumbled by chance upon Plautus comedies." On the next page is a reference to the *Curculio*.² Gabriel Harvey calls attention to the Latin playwrights occasionally. Compare, e.g., the letter to *Immerito*, written in 1580, in which "for conceyt of Witte and eloquent decyphering of matters" he selects Plautus and Terence as representative in Latin literature. Compare, too, his reference to "the comedie of *Adelphi* or the two *Asses*: a more notable Pageant, than the Interlude of the two *Sosias*, or the two *Amphitryos*, or the two *Menechmi*, or the two *Martin Guerras*."³ All the writers on the art of poetry cite examples from Latin comedy. Sidney, perhaps the warmest admirer of the classics in his own day, and the most ardent advocate of the adoption of classical standards in the drama, in his *Apologie for Poetry* refers to the authorship of the *Heautontimorumenos*,⁴ to Thraso,⁵ to the question of the observation of the unity of time in Plautus and Terence,⁶ and to the mingling of tragedy and comedy in the *Amphitruo*.⁷ A great part of the first book of Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (1584-88) is devoted to an examination of the ancient drama, its characteristics, and the manner of putting plays on the stage in ancient days. In Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie*

¹ *Histriomastix*, 1633, pp. 913, 916 (quoted by Warton, v. iv, p. 233).

² *The School of Abuse*, Arber's Reprint, pp. 30 and 31.

³ *The Works of Gabriel Harvey*, ed. Grosart. *Pierce's Supererogation*, Vol. II, p. 250.

⁴ *Apologie for Poetry*, Arber's Reprint, p. 59.

⁵ V. p. 67.

⁶ V. p. 64.

⁷ V. p. 65.

(1586) there is a reference to Plautus and Terence, who "have beene ever since theyr time most famous, and to these dayes are esteemed as greate helpes and furtheraunces to the obtayning of good Letters."¹ After a particularly warm commendation of Phaer, Twyne, Golding, Googe, Flemming and other translators of the classics, Webbe answers the objections which have been urged against Plautus and Terence on account of their immorality.² His chief argument is the quoting of Sir Thomas Elyott's translation of "Plautus in commendations of virtue" in the *Amphitruo*, Terence in *Eunuchus*, etc.

In both the dramatic and non-dramatic works of the playwrights similar references are occasionally found, but only in the writings of Greene are they numerous. In the *Orlando Furioso* he speaks of Hercules as Alcmena's child, and in *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* we find the passage

Nor do I come as Jupiter did erst
Unto the palace of Amphitryon
For any fond or foul concupiscence
Which I do bear to Alcumena's love.³

although, of course, neither of these passages necessarily derive from Plautus's comedy. In *The Carde of Fancie* a character from one of Terence's plays is cited for the purpose of developing a rather elaborate simile,⁴ and a similar figure in the same work is to the effect that "like Menechmus Subreptus his wife thou doest not begin to love, ere again thou seekest to hate."⁵ In *The Royal Exchange*, printed in 1590, we have a reference to "Parrasites such as Terence and Plautus discovers in their Comedies, hange theyr freendshippe at the Tables ende, and theyr loyaltie at the Caters basket."⁶ In *Francesco's Fortunes or The Second Part of Greenes Never too late* a detailed account is given of the characters of Grecian comedy, together with its purpose. The drama of Plautus and Terence is similarly treated, and also the vogue and decline of comedy in Rome.⁷ *A Quippe for an Upstart Courtier* has the simile: "But as these upstart changelings went strouting like

¹ *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Haslewood, pp. 29, 30.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

³ *The Complete Works of Robert Greene*, ed. Grosart, Vol. XIII, p. 234.

⁴ V. Vol. IV, p. 17.

⁵ V. Vol. IV, p. 61.

⁶ V. Vol. VII, p. 243.

⁷ V. Vol. VIII, p. 129 seq.

Philopolimarchides the bragart in Plautus . . ."¹ These examples will serve to show how familiarly Greene knew Latin comedy, and they only make greater the wonder when we consider how free his dramatic work is from any real effect of the influence thus brought to bear upon him. His writings are much more voluminous than are those of the other "university wits," but even when allowance is made for this, his references to Plautus and Terence are much more frequent than in the case of any of his contemporaries. In Peele's works the only influence of this kind I have noticed is in *The Old Wives Tale*, published in 1595, where we have reference made to "the most famous stock of Huanebango—Polimackeroeplacidus my grandfather, my father Pergopolineo, my mother Dionora de Sardinia famously descended."

Do you hear, sir? had not you a cousin that was called Gusteceridis?

Indeed I had a cousin that sometime followed the court unfortunately, and his name Bustegusteceridis.²

Dyce pointed out that "Here Peele seems to have had an eye to the hard names in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus." Similarly formed words are also to be found in the *Captivi*, Act II, Sc. ii, and *Pseudolus*, Act IV, Sc. ii, and the origin of the words manufactured by Peele is pretty certainly to be found in some of these formations of Plautus. In Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* we have a line quoted (not quite accurately) from the *Andria*,³ and in his translation of Ovid's *Elegies* occur the lines:

Rude Ennius, and Plautus full of Wit,
Are both in Fame's eternal legend writ.⁴

Apart from these references there is little evidence in any of Marlowe's works that he had even read Roman comedy. The rare instances in which other playwrights of this period refer to Plautus or Terence or their dramas, are almost all in works produced toward the close of the century, and will be noticed in the next chapter.

¹ V. Vol. XI, pp. 215, 216.

² *The Works of Peele*, ed. Bullen, Vol. I, p. 316.

³ *The Works of Marlowe*, ed. Bullen, Vol. II, p. 18, *Ego mihimet sum semper proximus*. Cf. *Andria*, IV, 1, 12, *Proximus sum egomet mihi*.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III; *Elegia*, xv, p. 137, ll. 19, 20.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST DECADE OF THE CENTURY

The chief sin of omission committed by the early authors of Romantic drama consisted in their comparative indifference to questions of plot and structure; their sins of commission constituted a much longer category. Their excellences at best were excellences of detail, and in their delight over these attainments they neglected the weightier matters of dramatic law.⁵ In almost every one of the *fin de siècle* playwrights there is to be seen a straining after novel and unnatural effects; to men like Sidney and Ben Jonson Romanticism in its initial stages was practically synonymous with unreal vagaries and irresponsible, inartistic crudeness of representation. The rôles played by actors like Tarlton and Kemp and the popularity and reputation acquired by their impromptu witticisms, together with the frequent directions for improvisation, in which the dramas of the period abound, tell no uncertain tale as to the indifference of authors to their works from the standpoint of literature as a fine art. No single one of the unities was treated with even courteous consideration. That in the ideal play, or act, or scene, every detail should contribute to the realization of the central artistic purpose was an idea which seems never to have occurred to them. Their interest was in other things. The Elizabethan age was one of intense curiosity regarding the world and all its wonders, but it was primarily a curiosity regarding fact and incident rather than the more general philosophic interest which concerns itself with the world-old problems of existence or the multitudinous variety of human nature. Accordingly we have presented horrible murders, bloody battles, ghosts, daggers, poison; or again, strange accounts of the natural wonders of foreign lands,—as in Lyly's "unnatural natural history,"—accounts of incredible feats of gallantry or chivalry, and impossible escapades of all sorts. For the ordinary scale according to which every-day affairs are measured, is substituted one characterized by largeness or idealized beauty; a fairyland atmosphere has enveloped inci-

dents and *dramatis personae* alike. Hence we may not look here for accuracy or conviction in the delineation of character. This is more true, to be sure, of some individual authors and plays than of others, but with this spirit in a more or less diluted form the whole drama of the period was informed. In a word, the Romantic drama is dramatic in its incident, not in its characters. From contemporary life the playwright seems separated by an unbridgeable gulf, except when he becomes an active religious or political partisan and degrades his art to the service of special pleading. Inadequate, often wholly primitive stage apparatus with its "creaking throne," "nimble squib," "rolled bullet," and "tempestuous drum," did not contribute to the relieving of the sense of unreality. Poetic passages of exquisite beauty stand on the same page with the purest rant, and in tragedy examples of bathos are usually not far to seek. The comedies of the period, especially, showed on the whole much crudeness and coarseness, great lack of restraint and of proportion. Professor Herford thus sums up the kind of humor at which they had arrived: "There was the rough native humour of the professional clown, with his variant, the Vice of the Moralities, the humour of practical jokes and horseplay. There was the more refined humour of the professional jester, becoming normal in the persistently pointed dialogue of Lyly. There was the humour of accident, confusions of identity through disguise or natural likeness—the offspring chiefly of Italian novels. . . . There was lastly the humour of mere absurdity and ignorance, that of the clown by nature, not by profession."¹ The characters of comedy were so many pegs upon which to hang sallies of mirth or coarse jests. That anyone should speak in character was a minor consideration, and accordingly a single play is frequently a gallimaufry of farce, improvisation, and brilliantly clever dialogue. In short, a crude, untutored interest in wonders, surprises, and impromptu sallies of fun had completely taken the place of a more cultivated appreciation of dramatic art.

Public taste would have been in an unhealthy state indeed had a reaction not set in, and that before any great

¹ General Introduction to the Mermaid edition of best plays of Ben Jonson, Vol. I, xv-xvi.

lapse of time. The primitive character of the most highly esteemed merits of the majority of contemporary comedies, as well as their consistent ignoring of the conditions of contemporary life and the primary principles of art, must have been a source of constant irritation to those who believed that the drama should be an artistic creation and that it should not be absolutely divorced—in spirit as well as in subject-matter—from the experiences and interests of the audience before which it was presented. The greater part of the last decade of the century may be looked at as a preparation for the later pronounced and self-conscious revolt against the law-ignoring, inartistic, undramatic representations then in vogue, and it is in that light that we shall study it here.

Once granted the necessity of the reaction there could be but little question as to the manner in which it must work itself out. All modern literary movements which have been instituted in conscious opposition to prevailing tendencies toward heaping up promiscuous beauties to the neglect of an organizing and heightening their potency by allying it to beauty of form, have instinctively turned for guidance and teaching to the finished products of classical art. These have remained through the centuries a standard of excellence—limited perhaps in its conception, but perfect after its kind—a standard to test the formal legitimacy of literary art, and to recall wanderers from straying too far in the by-paths of unrelated beauty. In the movement we are now considering the natural reversion was to the works of the Latin comedy-writers, and in no previous period of English literary history had the comedies of Plautus and Terence received so great attention. I have called the first part of the decade a preparation for the revolt announced in Ben Jonson's first two great comedies, and the order of development of this movement toward confessed imitation of Latin dramatic models may be traced with a fair degree of definiteness. In the first place we find great activity of translation going on side by side with frequent adaptations of Latin comedy or some of its characteristics or motifs. These adaptations were not at all in the spirit of criticism of Romantic comedy; they often partook more of the nature of the new than of the ancient models. But with the representation of *Every Man in His Humour* in 1596 and its publication in 1598 the overt reaction had begun, and its

precise nature had been loudly heralded. We shall consider briefly these different phases of the movement.

No comedy of Plautus had as yet attained to the honor of an English translation; the first extant English version of any of his plays is to be found in the *Menaechmi* of W. W., printed in quarto in 1595. That this translator, as Warton asserts, was William Warner, the author of *Albion's England*—and in this Warton has been quite generally followed by later writers—I have found no reason to believe any more than that he was identical with the W. W. who translated Bandello's *Novelli*, or William Webbe, who translated the *Georgics* and some of the *Bucolics*. The *Menaechmi* is the only extant translation of a comedy of Plautus during the sixteenth century, though we know that others certainly were translated. Preceding W. W.'s version of the *Menaechmi* is a note of "the Printer to the Readers" to the effect that "the writer hereof (loving Readers) having diverse of this Poettes Comedies Englished, for the use and delight of his private friends, who in Plautus owne words are not able to understand them: I have prevailed so far with him as to let this one go farther abroad, for a publike recreation and delight to all those, that affect the diverse sorts of bookes compiled in this kind, whereof (in my judgment) in harmelesse mirth and quicknesse of fine conceit, the most of them come far short of this."¹ There can be no reasonable doubt, then, that the translator of the *Menaechmi* also translated others of Plautus's comedies,² though there is no record of any others having been printed. Warton tells us that "Tanner says he [W. W.] translated but not printed all Plautus.—*MSS. Tann. Oxon.*"³ In the same note Warton speaks of the translations of Terence: "Rastall printed *Terens in English*, that is, the *Andria*. There is also *Andria, the first Comedye of Terence*, by Maurice Kyffin, 1588. . . . The *Eunuchus* was entered at Stationers' Hall to W. [Leake] in 1597, and the *Andria* and *Eunuchus*, in 1600.—*Registr. C, fol. 20, a.*" To this list it might be added that portions of Terence which Udall had edited and translated in 1533, "doubtless for the benefit of the scholars at Eton,"⁴

¹ *Shakespeare's Library*, Hazlitt, Vol. V, p. 3.

² The question as to whether *The Birthe of Hercules* may not possibly have been one of these will be discussed in another connection.

³ *Op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 323, note.

⁴ Hazlitt, *Schools, School-books and School-masters*, p. 91.

were reprinted with additions by Higgins in 1575 and 1581. It is thus evident that there was no lack of activity in the way of translating the Latin comedy.

The relation of the translation of the *Menaechmi* to its original is very simple, and is aptly enough described in the printer's word of introduction as "neither so exactly written as it may carry any name of a Translation, nor such libertie therein used, as that he would notoriously varie from the Poets owne order." The translator varies neither notoriously nor otherwise from the order of Plautus's play, the latter being followed exactly and scene by scene. But scarcely a single passage of any length is a literal translation. The essence of each Latin scene is preserved in a much curtailed form, the translation being of the freest kind. On the other hand the variations from the substance of the original text are few, slight, and unimportant, and the printer's asterisk—the meaning of which is that "where you finde this marke, the Poets conceit is somewhat altered, by occasion either of the time, the country, or the phrase"—is called into requisition but seldom. The nature of the liberties thus taken with the original may be seen in the passage in which for the list of Roman dishes we have substituted "some oysters, a mary-bone pie or two, some artichockes, and potato rootes."

In *Nashe's Lenten Stuffle* (1599) we have the following passage¹: "Plautus in his *Rudens* bringeth in fishermen cowthring and quaking dung wet after a storme, and complaining their miserable case in this forme, *Captanus cibum e mari, si eventus non venit, neque quicquam captum est piscium*,

¹ *The Complete Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Grosart (Huth Library) Vol. V, p. 305. Nashe seems to have known Plautus particularly well. In his address "to the gentlemen students of both universities," one of his earliest works, he had ridiculed the "Thrasonical huff-snuff" style, and he tells us in his *Lenten Stuffle* that in style he had endeavored to be Italianate, and "of all styles I most affect and strive to imitate Aretine's." His references to Latin comedy are numerous. In *The Unfortunate Traveller* (Jack Wilton) [ed. Gosse, pp. 82-86], published in 1594, there is a ridiculous account of the manner in which the students at Wittenberg played the *Acolastus*. This was followed by disputations, and here was present "that abundant scholler Cornelius Agrippa,"—"the greatest conjurer in Christendome." The doctors wished to see him "doe something extraordinarie memorable," and "one requested to see pleasant Plautus, and that he would shew them in what habite he went, and with what countenance he lookt, when he ground corne in the mill." In *Four Letters Confuted* he tells us that "Plautus personated no parasite," but he made him a slave or a bondman" (Vol. II, p. 216); in the same work occurs the passage: "Thou hast arrogated to thy selfe more than Lucifer, or any Miles Gloriosus in the worlde would doe," (p. 273). In *Have with you to Saffron Walden* he speaks of "*scelerata sinapis* shrewish, snappish mustard as Plautus calls it," (Vol. III, p. 42). Mere references to both Plautus and Terence are very common in his work.

salsi lautiq. domum redimus clanculum dormimus incaenatum: All the meate that we eate we catch out of the sea, and if there we misse, wel washed and salted, wee sneake home to bed supperlesse: and upon the taile of it hee brings in a parasite that flowteth and bowrdeth them thus: *Heus vos familia gens hominum ut vivitis ut peritis?* hough, you hunger starved gubbins or offalles of men, how thrive you, howe perish you; and they cringing in their neckes, like rattes smothered in the holde, poorly replicated, *Vivimus fame speq., sitiq.,* with hunger, and hope, and thirst wee content ourselves." But as has been already said no other extensive translation of Plautus has come down to us from this period.

† We shall now consider certain plays which are either adaptations of the comedies of Plautus, or which, if independent in plot, go back to the same source in some important details of characterization or motiving. The first of these we have already taken up,—Lyly's *Mother Bombie*, and it need not detain us longer in this connection. We shall pass on, then, to *The Comedy of Errors*, the only play of 'Shakspeare in which he has drawn to any considerable extent upon a comedy of Plautus.¹ The immediate source of Shakspeare's play has never been conclusively determined. Collier's conjecture was that the old play, *The History of Error*, which was acted January 1, 1577, had also been an adaptation of Plautus's *Menaechmi*, and had furnished to Shakspeare the ground work of his plot. Another theory is that the translation by W. W., which was not printed till 1595 (*The Comedy of Errors* was probably written about 1591) had been seen by Shakspeare in manuscript. A third possibility is that Shakspeare read Plautus

¹ Shakspeare's indebtedness in this particular has not always been so narrowly limited, and indeed certain slight borrowings are not far to seek. The names of the servants Grumio and Tranio in *The Taming of the Shrew* were in all probability derived from the *Mostellaria*; and the exact correspondence between the Hamlet line "Assume a virtue if you have it not," and Amphitryon's speech to Alcmena, *Saltem tute si pudoris egeas sumas mutuum*, is certainly striking. That the picture of Falstaff in the *Merry Wives* owes anything to that of Pyrgopolinices there is little reason to believe, and if we accept the popular story of the hurried composition of the English play, the improbability increases, and we are reminded once more that there are other portrayals of the "miles gloriosus" than the type depicted by Plautus. For a rather questionable list of examples of Shakspeare's indebtedness to Plautus, which includes comparisons between Shylock and Euclio in the *Aulularia*, Prospero and Daemones in the *Rudens*, Pericles and Daemones, and *The Taming of the Shrew* and the *Trinummus*, v. *Plautus and his Imitators*, Quarterly Review, 1891, Vol. II—a review of Reinhardtstoettner's work on Plautus. V. also Reinhardtstoettner's work *passim* in the division assigned to English literature in his consideration of each of the plays of Plautus.

at first hand, but this would seem the least plausible way of accounting for the facts, since we have direct evidence of his "small Latin" and no direct evidence tending greatly to modify the meaning of Jonson's phrase. Shakspeare's play is thus noted in the *Gesta Grayorum*, under date A.D. 1594: "After such sports a Comedy of Errors (like to Plautus his *Menaechmus*) was played by the players. So that night was begun and continued to the end in nothing but confusion and errors; whereupon, it was ever afterward called 'The Night of Errors.'"¹

The connection between the English play and the *Menaechmi*, as well as the extent to which Shakspeare borrowed from Plautus, will become clearer from a brief synopsis of the plot in each case. That of the *Menaechmi* is as follows: The wife of a Syracusan merchant gave birth to twin sons, so similar in appearance that their own mother could not distinguish the one from the other. When they were seven years old their father took one of them, Menaechmus by name, on a voyage to Tarentum. Here the child was stolen and carried off to Epidamnus, in which city he eventually married a wealthy wife, who proved to be "a shrew but honest." The father's grief for the loss of his child was so great that he died, and their grandfather changed the name of Sosicles, the remaining twin, to Menaechmus—the name borne by the child which had been stolen. Menaechmus Sosicles, having grown to manhood, sets out to search for his brother, and with his servant, Messenio, finally arrives at Epidamnus in the sixth year of his search. Immediately the complications begin. Menaechmus of Epidamnus finds the society of Erotium, a courtesan, more congenial than that of his wife, and is in the habit of presenting the clothes and jewels of the latter to his mistress. A dinner prepared for him at the house of Erotium is eaten [by his brother, and many ludicrous incidents take place, in which the chief supplementary characters are Cylindrus, a cook; Peniculus, a parasite; Erotium; a doctor; and the wife and the father-in-law of Menaechmus of Epidamnus. The latter is at length adjudged insane by the doctor and the father-in-law, and is carried off by their orders, only to be rescued by Messenio, who thinks to aid his master. Finally, the clever servant divines the explanation of all the difficulties, and

¹ Nichols, *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. II. *Gesta Grayorum*, p. 16.

manages to restore concord once more. For his services he is given his liberty, and Menaechmus of Epidamnus resolves to sell his possessions and to accompany his brother to their native city.

The Comedy of Errors takes over the general situation of long-separated twin brothers meeting under such peculiar circumstances, retains the figures of the wife and the courtesan, but introduces the father and mother of the twins, as well as some merchants, a goldsmith, the wife's sister, and, most important of all, a pair of twin slaves. An outline of the plot is as follows: Aegeon, a merchant of Syracuse, having been taken prisoner in Ephesus, is brought before the Duke and condemned to death. He is granted a respite, however, on telling his story. His wife had given birth to twin boys exactly alike, at the same hour that another pair of twin boys had been born of a bondwoman. Aegeon bought the latter pair to serve his sons, but somewhat later a shipwreck separated him, one of his sons, and one of the slaves from his wife, the other son, and the other slave. The sons' names are Antipholus, and one of them is now of Syracuse, the other of Ephesus—the scene of the play; the slaves are called Dromio. Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant Dromio come to Ephesus, and from this point on, the play deals with the many possibilities of confusion resulting from the inevitable mistaking of one brother for another. One scene (Act III, Sc. i), in which Antipholus of Ephesus and his servant Dromio are flouted and refused entrance to their own house by the other Dromio, whose master is enjoying himself within, is precisely the situation presented in the *Amphitruo*, with the exception that here everyone is deceived, while in the Latin play the gods are of course omniscient. The twin slaves occasion many more perplexities than we have in the *Menaechmi*. Dromio of Syracuse encounters the sweetheart of his brother, and so gets into difficulties exactly similar to those of his master. The scenes with the courtesan in the *Menaechmi* are much curtailed, the parasite, cook, father-in-law, doctor, and courtesan's maid are entirely omitted, and the wife is portrayed as being much less shrewish. One interesting change of incident is her bringing a conjurer to exorcise the evil spirit which she believes has taken possession of her husband. At the close all the characters are brought together before an abbey in which Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant have been compelled to take refuge

from the mishaps which threaten them. Explanations follow quickly. Aegeon recognizes his son, and the abbess turns out to be the long-lost mother. The Duke pardons Aegeon and there is general rejoicing.

It will readily be seen that *The Comedy of Errors* is a much more complicated, and perhaps for that reason, a much less probable play than the *Menaechmi*. The improbability, however, must be accepted at the beginning, and after that is accomplished it causes little trouble. The movement is so rapid, and the many absurd situations which are possible are so perfectly developed, that one forgets to question whether this could have happened, in feeling how much more diverting is each succeeding scene than was its predecessor. Although the general plot of the *Menaechmi* is taken over, and a few of the names of the *dramatis personae* are preserved, comparatively few of the situations due to mistake are reproduced, and the whole play is recast and altered, so that it bears but little similarity in detail to that on which it was modeled. For instance, the courtesan here plays a strictly minor part and is very little in evidence, Antipholus of Syracuse falls in love with the maiden sister of his brother's wife, and new incidents are introduced at every turn. But the great difference consists in the introduction of the twin slaves Dromio, together with the father and mother of their masters. The whole play borders closely on the *reductio ad absurdum* of the mistaken identity motif, and is never very far from farce, but in its kind it is certainly inimitable. That the scene in which Antipholus of Ephesus is refused entrance to his house may have been originated by Shakspeare simply as a development of the general situation is quite possible, but I am inclined to think that he must have been familiar, through whatever medium, with the similar scene in the *Amphitruo*. The correspondence is practically perfect. In the Latin play a master and his servant are refused admission to their home, are flouted and finally driven off by Mercury playing the rôle of the servant's double, while Jupiter in the rôle of the master's double is enjoying himself with the wife of the latter. In *The Comedy of Errors* we have exactly this situation, except that the intruding master and servant are mortals, and the twin brothers respectively of those who are excluded. It would seem highly improbable that so exact a parallel should be a mere coincidence.

In his *Manual for the Collector and Amateur of Old Plays*, Hazlitt, following Halliwell, assigns *The Birthe of Hercules* to the period "about 1590." If this date were correct we should have in that play another example of an adaptation nearly one-third of which is entirely original, the remainder, however, showing many examples of almost literal translation. But, as we shall see, there are a number of reasons for assigning the play to a considerably later date, and as an analysis of it is given in another connection we shall omit it here.

In May, 1595, a play on the subject of Hercules was brought out in two parts by Martin Slaughter, and judging by the entries in *Henslowe's Diary*,¹ was very successful. In Henslowe's "Note of all suche bookes as belong to the Stocks and such as I have bought since the 3d of March 1598," occur both the "1 p^t of Hercules" and the "2 p^{te} of Heroles."² Neither of these has been preserved, and there is no account of their having been printed. In 1613 Thomas Heywood printed *The Silver Age* and *The Bronze Age*, the second and third of his series—*The Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Age*. *The Golden Age* had been printed in 1611, but Mr. Ward surmises that the whole series belongs "to an early period in Heywood's career."³ It has also been held that Heywood's *Silver Age* was based on Slaughter's play, and that the former may have been produced shortly after the appearance of the *Hercules* in 1595. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that *The Silver Age*, if it does not fall within the actual period we are considering, was written at a time but little posterior to the close of the century, and this fact may justify a consideration of the play at this point, though the accurate determination of the date of its production is at present impossible.

The full title of Heywood's play is *The Silver Age—including the love of Jupiter to Alcmena, The Birthe of Hercules, and The Rape of Proserpine, concluding with the Arraignement of the Moone*.⁴ The main characters number forty-two besides serving-men, swains, Theban ladies, the Seven Planets, and the Furies, and the play is virtually a panorama of loosely-connected scenes, no attempt being made to arrive at anything like real unity. That portion of the play which deals with the

¹ V. *Henslowe's Diary* (Old Shak. Soc. edition), Vol. VII, pp. 51-62.

² *Ibid.*, p. 276.

³ *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 578.

⁴ *Old Shak. Soc. Pub.*, Vol. VI, p. 69.

story of the *Amphitruo* is confined entirely to the second act, and there is no subdivision into scenes. Homer appears as a kind of chorus throughout, and after a short prologue by him we have a long stage direction, in which the characters of the preceding act are disposed of, and Homer announces:

Of Jupiter, now deified and made
Supreme of all the gods, we next proceed.

The general situation is explained just as in Plautus, except that Mercury's place is filled by Ganymede. The play opens with a soliloquy by Jupiter, followed by a short dialogue between him and Ganymede. The latter, in the guise of Sosia, informs three serving-men of Amphitryon's success in battle; these report to their mistress Alcmena, and presently Jupiter, in the likeness of her husband, appears. In the ensuing dialogue he tells Alcmena all the circumstances of the battle, and presents to her the cup of King Pterelas, which Mercury—not Ganymede—had stolen from Amphitryon's casket. The story up to this point is not related in Plautus at all, and on the other hand, all that part of Act I, Sc. i, of the *Amphitruo* consisting of Sosia's lament over his hard lot, and his private rehearsal of the message he is to deliver to his mistress, is omitted. The correspondence between the two plays begins with the passage relating to Sosia's astonishment as to the length of the night. From this point on *The Silver Age* follows, with few exceptions, the order of the *Amphitruo*, and occasionally approaches literal translation, though usually in very short passages. As this whole part of the play takes up only about twenty pages of the Old Shakspere Society edition, it goes without saying that the Latin comedy is extensively "cut" in the adaptation. Whole scenes are omitted and all are shortened. Some of the chief variations are as follows:

Sosia tells his story of a double, not only to Amphitryon, but also to two captains who accompany the general.

Alcmena's soliloquy on the hard lot of women, together with the asides of her husband and Sosia (*Amph.* II, ii), are omitted.

The Amphitryon-Sosia dialogue at this point is left out, and Alcmena and her servants are introduced in conversation.

The goblet is produced, after which Amphitryon and Sosia examine the seal and the casket. In Plautus the examination takes place first.

Alcmena's circumstantial account of the events of the preceding night follows the cup incident; in Plautus it precedes it.

Of the *Amphitruo*, Act III, Sc. i and Scs. iii and iv, as also Act IV, Scs. i, ii, and iii are omitted entirely.

In *The Silver Age* Jupiter meets and deceives Blepharo and Sosia. The captains, who are original with Heywood, accompany Amphitryon and are characters throughout. They desert, believing Jupiter to be Amphitryon.

Amphitryon and Sosia, when left alone, are both afraid to claim their own names. They fall asleep, and Juno, in great wrath and accompanied by Iris, descends. Then follows the thunder and lightning, and the scene closes, as in Plautus, with Jupiter's explanation. The next act, which deals with "The Birthe of Hercules," treats of Juno's futile attempts to prevent Alcmena's giving birth to the child. Iris then brings the serpents from Africa, and they are promptly strangled. The play goes on to relate other "labors," which Hercules had to undertake on account of Juno's spite.

The act is a mere sketch of the *Amphitruo*, and may be termed a loose adaptation. There are some usually unimportant additions, many omissions and modifications; the order is generally, though not strictly, followed, and literal translation is rare. The act is written in blank verse, prose, couplets, and quatrains.

The last of the plays of this period which are either adaptations of some comedy of Plautus, or which are indebted to him in some important particular¹ is *Timon of Athens*, an anonymous play, written or transcribed about the year 1600.² The story of Timon, or the Man-Hater, as he is called in Lucian, was well-known at this time, and is referred to in *Love's Labour's Lost* and in *Skialetheia*,³ a collection of epigrams and satires which was published in 1598. The story is told in Plutarch, and from this ultimate source found its way into *The Palace of Pleasure*. Dyce is usually upheld in his belief that

¹ It may be mentioned that *John a Kent and John a Cumber* contains several suggestions of the "doubt as to one's own identity" motif.

² Hazlitt, *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. VI.

³ *Skialetheia* contains a passage referring to the staging of Plautus's plays at this time:

"Or if my dispose
Persuade me to a play, Ile to the Rose,
Or Curtaine, one of Plautus comedies,
Or the pathetick Spaniard's tragedies."

Shakspeare's play of the same name owes nothing to the earlier anonymous version, but the fact that a scene in which Timon gives a banquet to his false friends is common to both plays, but is not found either in Lucian or Plutarch, is surely very difficult of explanation unless we recognize some connection between the two plays. The general subject has no connection with any of Plautus's comedies, but the character of Philargarus, the miser, is in many respects closely modeled on that of Euclio in the *Aulularia*, the latter play being sometimes followed even to literal translation, and again there are certain scenes and incidents which hark back to Latin comedy. The different kinds of borrowing I shall consider in order:

1. *Names*. Gelasimus, a city heir, bears the same name as the parasite in *Stichus*.

2. *Translated Lines*.¹ Cf.:

her gowne is rent,
Or ells shee stands in neede of a Gould ringe, (p. 399).

with

Aut periit aurum aut conscissa pallula est.
Truculentus, Act I, Sc. i, l. 32.

Compare also Grunio's description of Philargarus:

Hee tells
How many spyders are about his house,
Leaste any one of us steale one of them:
.....
When hee sleepest
Ties a paire of bellowes to his winde-pipe.

Ob. Why soe?

Grun. Least in his sleepe he lose parte of his breathe.
with two passages descriptive of Euclio:

Araneas mi ego illas servari volo.
Aulularia, I, ii, 9.

and

Quin quom it dormitum follem obstringit ob gulam.
Anth. Cur? Str. Nequid animae forte amittat dormiens.
Aulularia, III, i, 302-303.

3. *Similarity of individual scenes or passages*.

(a) The enumeration of dishes at the banquet given by Timon (p. 462) recalls similar lists frequently given in Plautus.

(b) Cf. the extract:

Give me free passage; ye knowen and unknowen persons, gette ye
out of my way, least, as I goe, I offende any with my heade, my
elbowe or my breaste, (p. 481).

¹ Both these passages are pointed out in Hazlitt's edition of the play.

with any of the similar speeches in Plautus, e.g., *Captivi*, IV, ii, in which Ergasilus announces that his fist is a balista, his arm a catapulta and his shoulder a battering-ram, and intimates further that those who meet him will probably soon find occupation in picking up their teeth.

(c) In the epilogue Timon asks for a "plaudite," as was usually done on the Roman stage.

4. Characterization.

Pseudocheus, the lying traveler, and Lollo, the intoxicated country clown, declare, the one that he has slain 2,000 Amazons at once, the other that he has this day killed 3,000 Trojans. This specific boasting recalls that of Pyrgopolinices and his parasite. Another side of the character of Plautus's "miles gloriosus" is suggested in Gelasimus, the half-witted fop, who is in love with himself, and believes that all women dote on him. But the great example of borrowing in the way of characterization is to be found in the picture of Philargarus, the miser, who is a direct reproduction of Euclio. When first we meet him he is giving orders to his servant to protect his house properly, lest some one break in and steal. When he believes that his hidden gold has been found, he gives vent to his despair in a speech (p. 435), which is almost a free translation of Euclio's outburst under precisely similar circumstances (*Aulul.* III, vi). His intense desire to get his daughter married to a rich man and without a dowry—"without a dowry, that, remember that"—is the counterpart of one of the chief aims in the life of Euclio. Cf., e.g., Euclio's "*At nil est dotis quod dem*" (II, ii, 238), and "*illud facito ut memineris convenisse ut nequid dotis mea ad te afferret filia*" (II, ii, 257-58). We have already seen that Philargarus, like Euclio, counts the spiders of his house, and has a device for saving his breath. Grunnio is "more hungry than hunger," and there is nothing to eat in his master's house; Staphyla gives us the same information regarding the house of Euclio. These examples establish clearly enough the relation between the two misers, and though the situations in which the character of Philargarus is developed are not all derived from the *Aulularia*, his actions never belie his kinship with the family of Euclio.

I do not purpose at this point to make an exhaustive study of the influence of the Latin comedy-writers on Ben Jonson; I

wish merely to refer to the beginnings of a movement of which Jonson was from the first the recognized leader. His earliest extant plays are animated by a spirit of intense admiration for the ancient comedy, and intense dislike of the unregulated beauties of the contemporary comic muse. The portraying of the manners of his time in a drama, which, constructed on classical models, should aim at purely artistic excellence, was the object he set before himself. In the prologue to *Every Man in his Humour* (played in 1596, printed in 1598), he carries forward the laments and scorn of Sidney and Whetstone, and ridicules the "ill customs of the age," which compel the playwright

To make a child, now swaddled, to proceed
Man, and then shoot up, in one beard, and weed,
Past threescore years.

What he himself proposes to do he also declares. He will show forth

. . . deeds and language such as men do use:
And persons, such as comedy would choose,
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes.

This he believed to be the legitimate end of comedy, and he found that it was practically exemplified in the Latin drama. His perfect familiarity with the latter now became the strongest element in the development of his artistic creed. "We may collect," says Gifford, "from *The Case is Altered* and *Every Man in his Humour* that he was recent from the study of Plautus and Terence."¹ Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine him as having his models open before him as he wrote, especially in such a passage as that in the epilogue of *Every Man out of his Humour* where he says: "I will not do as Plautus in his *Amphytrio* for all this *summi Jovis causa plaudite*; beg a plaudite for God's sake; but if you out of the bounty of your goodness will bestow it," etc. But Jonson's plays are far from being English translations of Latin comedy. It was because he saw in the latter artistic transcriptions of real life, and because he felt that this was the ideal which comedy should strive to attain, that he consciously and deliberately made Plautus and Terence his models. His first play betrays its prototype at every page while remaining

¹ *Memoirs*, p. lxx.

thoroughly original and essentially English. "Its relation to Latin comedy," says Mr. Herford, "is indeed unmistakable. Most of the 'humours' have prototypes there. The jealous husband, the timid father, the rakish sons, the boasting soldier, the cunning slave of Plautus and Terence have helped (*pace* Gifford) to suggest Kitely and Kno'well, Edward Kno'well and Wellbred, Bobadil and Brainworm. But only to suggest them. No more genuine sketches of London character are to be found in the drama. They are drawn, not from books, but from observation, and as an observer Jonson had no equal among his contemporaries save Shakespeare."¹

The appearance of *Every Man in his Humour* announced and marked a distinct epoch in the development of English drama. It was not the beginning of a movement destined to overthrow the triumphs hitherto secured by romantic drama; it was the inauguration of a school of comedy which was to stand for the more severe, more restrained, more simple types of beauty—and this is applicable with regard both to the matter and the form—as opposed to the dominant ignoring of the larger formal beauties, and the exaltation of heterogeneous excellences presented in a carelessly unrelated fashion. The influence of Jonson and his "tribe" on the development of the brilliant Romantic school must have been of the most vital kind, and its effect is to be seen in many works which unite classical and romantic characteristics—the works of men who had listened to the seer of the Mermaid Tavern. A quarter of a century after the beginning of his career as a dramatist, Jonson must admit that

Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please
But antiquated and deserted lie
As they were not of Nature's family.

—compelled to yield to the all-compelling power of Shakespeare's genius. Romanticism in the drama had continued to flourish in spite of the strength of Jonson's work, but it was after having incorporated many of the best characteristics of a classical comedy, the influence of which had not been entirely dissipated when another movement began which was to result in the literary supremacy of classical ideals.

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. xviii-xix.

THE BIRTHE OF HERCULES

†THE BIRTHE OF HERCULES

PROLOGUS LAUREATUS

I am a Prologue; should I not tell you soe
You would scarce know me, tis soe longe agoe
Since Prologues were in use. Men put behinde
Now that they were wont to put before.
Thepilogue is in fashion, prologues no more.
But as an ould Cyttie woman well
Becomes her white capp still, an ould preist
His shaued crowne, A crosse an ould church dore,
Soe well befytted a prologue an ould plaie.
10 And this is ould, soe ould as none is more,
First plaide in Athens in the græcian tonge,
Since fūe tymes plaid in lattin, and in Rome.
There t has bene clapt by Consulls and emperors.
Then if yt lyke not you, blame not the Comedie,
But the poet, thactors, your-selues or all three.
And mark you that it is a Comedie,
Or tragicke Comedye, call yt which you will;
Tis no historie, Ballett, nor Borrass tale,
No pleasant newe Interlude, no pretty toye,
20 No pestered deuise, with Actors crowded in,
Drumbes, Ensignes, piphes, targetes & rusty swordes;
As farre from hence as deuills or inkhorne wordes
But all was saide when it was saide twas ould
'The wurst,' saies some; he is not ould that saies soe;
'The better,' he must saie, that would be soe.
And whie the wurste? Bycause ould thinges are stale?
woomen perhapps, houses, garmentes, and ould ale;
But what saie you to ould gould, what to ould honesty,
Ould faith and troth, better then twentie bondes,
30 Ould charitie, ould harty sporte, and meryment?
O, had you sene the world when Grandame Jone
Did call your Grandsire John, & he was well content!

† Folio 1 = blank flyleaf.

Some will not lyke those same translated thinges,
 meaninge by plaies? for a translated sute
 Will lyke them wondrous well; but let them knowe
 Our poetes auctor himself translated it
 Some for addinge to yt and alteringe yt
 must be offended, which for your sake
 Our Poet did, yet no Iniustice neither,
 But his Auctor, who hath done the lyke 40
 himself to others in many Comedies,
 In his *Asinaria*,¹ *Casina*, *Mercator*, *Epidicus*,
 And after him Terence in *Phormio* & *Eunuchus*;
 Besides, French and Italiens doe the same.
 †Some will condempne as unfyttinge heathen mouth
 the use of Christian asseueracions,
 Which use let use excuse. Soe in this playe
 Our auctor, oftentimes yeeldinge to forme,
 Sweres by Hercules ere Hercules was borne. 50
 But our poet lookes not to doe more
 Then Joue himself, who, raine he or hould he up,
 pleases not all: tis enough if he please some.
 And soe much might this Comedy more pleasinge be
 bycause yt patternes out a highe mistery.
 But one thinge he bad me tell you: pardone him this,
 And he craues us pardon for his next amyssse.

¹ Written "*Asinania*" in MS.

† Fol. 2 verse.

†MERCURIUS PROLOGUS

You would thinke yt were daie
 Now, I am sure; noe, it is night,
 Or at least, an you be good fellowes,
 Thinke soe for this once. Soe perhapps
 You would take me for a man,
 But you are deceiued, for I am a god,
 And that by this good night; yet I doe not wonder
 You should mistake me, for unles yt be
 The maskinge god Cupid, you may well
 10 Hauē heard of the ould Goddes, but I thinke
 It is a good while since you see any of us.
 Well, you are lyke to see twoe of us to-night,
 An you will, at least—an you will not
 You may chuse,—my father Jupiter & my-self,
 Merry Mercury, with one of the maddest pranks
 That euer my father and I plaied, and yet
 If you will beleue in the poets gospell
 We haue plaied a hundreth in our daies.
 The place where we now are is Thebes;
 20 This is Amphitruo his house,
 A great lord of this countrie, under Kinge Creon,
 And now at this instant, his deputy generall
 Of his Armye against the Teleboians,
 Upon whome he hath gotten a notable victory.
 In this meanetyme my father Jupiter,
 haueinge taken upon him his shape,
 Plaies his deputy speciall here at home
 With his wyf, faire Alcumena,
 Who verylie takes him for her husband.
 30 And he, by thadvantage of the night,
 Makes her beleue that for her sake
 He stole awaie of purpose from his Armye,
 But must be gone againe in any wise
 to be there by breake of daie.

Indeed he could not staie longer bycause of
Amphitruo his comeing home.

In this meane-while Amphitruo sends home
To his Lady a messenger of his good successe,
And after him another for faile,
And by to-morowe will be here himself.
And this is my office to send them backe againe
As wise as they came, for disturbeing of my father,
And to doe him such other services as you shall see
hereafter, till his busines be dispatcht.

40

†To this purpose haue I made my-self
as lyke Sosia, the first of these messengers,
as ys possible, and am taken here in the house
for the very same. And I can but smile
to see how kinde Alcumenas wayting woman,
Thessala, is to me, thinking suerly
that I am her loue Sosia. But that
you may knowe us asunder, I will
were in my hatt a peice of a fether
for a difference; and the same difference
shalbe betwixt my father and Amphitruo,
which none els shall perceaue but you.

50

And here comes in my Image to begin with all.
Now mark the sequell, but tell me
when we haue done, whither I and my
player plaied our partes well or noe.

60

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SOSIA, Servus Amphyt.

MERCURIUS.

DROMIO, alter Ser. Amphyt.

JUPITER.

ALCUMENA, uxor Amphyt.

THESSALA, pedissequa Alc.

AMPHITRUO, Imperator exercitu.

BLEPHARO, nauclerus.

BROMIA, altera e pedissequis Alc. 9.

†Fol. 3 b.

†THE BIRTHE OF HERCULES

ACTUS PRIMUS

SCENA I

SOSIA

MERCURIUS

(Ad comoediae magnificentiam apprime conferet ut coelum Histrionium sit luna & stellis perspicue distinctum.

Notae marginales inseruiant dirigendae histrioniae.

Mercurius exeat cum scipione in manu.)[†]

- S. Am not I a bould slaue, that knowinge fashions as I doe, dare alone adventure abroad thus late in the night? What if I should meete with the watch, and Master Constable should come and examyne me? "What are you, Sir?" "A gentleman," saie I, "at the least." Well, he makes no question of yt, and yet I make a question whither I shall fare the better for yt. "Then from whence come you?" I tell him, and he beleues me not. Or saie I tell him not, but gine the base fellow crosse language, and aske him, "What skilt you? How dare you be soe boulde as examyne any of the kinges servauntes?" for soe I may make him beleiue. Then he, meaninge Master Constable, laies the kinges servaunte, meaninge me, in the gaole.
- 10
- M. [*Aside.*] Where thou wilt wish the twice, I beleue, to be from hence, yet eare thou goest.
- S. I, and that which is worse, what if the pesant, havinge a knavish skonce lyke mine, come and floute me when he hath done, and aske me where the kinges servauntes should be lodged but in the kinges owne house? I' faith, then I haue made a fayre trauell of yt; yet forsooth I must needes be gone by night, and might not be suffred to staie till morninge. This it is to serve great men; they
- 20

†Fol. 4a.

All these directions in the MS. are written in the wide margins.

knowe much what labour is, and they regard as much what thine is, and yet there is ever about them some thinge to doe, & done yt must be, there is no remedie.

M. [*Aside.*] It were a wonder to see a base servaunte at anye tyme contented, or ever to heare him speake well of his Master.

S. Well, yet it is some ease to my mynde that my Master would rather countenance me with the message then that so ill fac't rascall Dromio, who had more need to be well Countenanced then I, though I saie yt my-self.

M. [*Aside.*] As good as your Countenance is, I doubt not but to see the coppie of yt altered eare you and I parte.

†S. (Meticulouse) Tis late night, and me-thinkes I feele in my-self more then ordinarie devotion. I had not a better mynde to my praiers a great while, and I must needes confesse I praie so seldome that if a mischeif should befall me to-night yt is no more then I haue well deserued. (In morem orantis)

M. [*Aside.*] I, now the villeine is afraied, now he rememb-40
bers God; this is iust the fashion of men. Yet it is well he can acknowledge what he is worthie of.

S. Tut, Sosia, pluck up a good harte; doest thou not come from the warrs? Is not victorie on thy side? I, such victorie who could ever haue hoped for? Our Enymies, whoe were in nomber aboue us, utterly overthrowne by the good conducte of our noble generall, the Story of which overthrowe I am to deliuer to his Lady and my mistres, which is the cause of my comeinge hither at this tyme. But I had best first call yt to minde by my-self, that yt be done with-50
out haglinge before her, least soe I disgrace my-self in the presence of my best beloved and most sweet Thessala. After we came on lande an Ambassador was dispatcht to the Enymie, to require restytucion of such thinges as they had taken from us, and on that condicion to offer them peace, otherwise warre. They denied restytucion; here-upon followed warre. The Armies were brought forth on both sides. I stood a quarter of a mile of behinde a hill, from whence I might easily discouer what was done, and that with double advantage. For if we gott the daie I was 60
sure to be one of the first at ransackinge the tentes, while

† Fol. 4 b.

others were occupied in pursuyng them that fledd; if we lost yt, I had a faire starte of the [rest]¹ for runynge awaie. But, by the masse, I must take heed of stumblinge upon this before my lady and mistres: soe were I quite shamed for ever. "No, I was by, madame, an eye wytnes, though not a very nigh wytnes of all. The signe beinge given and the alarum sounded, both Armies ioyned together. There was heavinge and shovinge, killinge and slayinge. But in a small time the Enymie began to flye soe fast that where I was a-fightinge I found not one man to resyste me." All this while I am sure I lye not.

M. [*Aside.*] Noe, I dare answer for the.

S. "As they fledd, in the chace Amphitruo my Lord, our worthie generall, killed Kinge Pterelas himself hand to hande. The fight lasted from morninge till night, well fare all good tokens, for that daie I went without any dynner, and with the approach of night the pursute ended. †The next daie the whole Cyttie came out barefoote and bare-headed, to yeeld themselues, and all they had, into our handes. And to our Lord Amphitruo, for his specyall desarte, they presented a goodlie Cupp, the same that their kinge he slewe was wonte to drinke in." And soe now I see I am readie in my tale. I will hasten home while yt is freshe in my memorie, least I forget yt againe.

M. [*Aside.*] Now is he comeinge hither; I will meet him half waie. An if he come anie nearer these dores at this tyme let Mercury be beleived on his word no more. I must haue a lytle sport with him. And as I am lyke him in Shape, soe will I, for this once, be content to become lyk him in manners to, I meane as craftie a Jybinge knave as he, for there is the credytt to put a man downe at his owne weapon. But me-thinkes he stands gazinge up soe earnestlie he hath spied some wonder in the Element. I will laie my lief yt is the man in the moone.

S. Is the moone and the starres sleepe drunke to-nichte, trowe we? The seauen starrs, Charles wayne, the planettes move not a whytt, and daie seemes as farre of now as yt did eight houres agoe.

100 M. [*Aside.*] Goe on, night, goe on, and favour my fathers

¹ Word omitted in copy of MS.

† Fol. 5 a.

pleasure still; thou canst not doe seruice, good night, to a better man.

- S. I haue found the reason now, Ile laye my lief on't: and the moone and her companie be not drunke now, at the least the Sonne was drunke yesternight, and that makes him lye in bedd soe longe this morninge.
- M. [*Aside.*] This vylleine thinkes the immortal Gods to be lyke himself. But tis all one; that is, he shall haue one reckoninge for all a-none.
- S. Ha, where are those good fellowes now that lye alone, ¹¹⁰ bycause they cannot chuse, for want of a bedfellowe? This were no night for a man to lye with a wench in.
- M. [*Aside.*] The fellowe speakes wysely, and accordinge to his counsell; my father hath chosen this night to lye with his mistres in.
- S. Well, I will hence. But whats he me-thinkes I see at the dore at this tyme of night? I doe not lyke yt. (*obnix circumspectans*)
- M. [*Aside.*] As fainte-harted a villeine as lyves againe.
- S. Who can tell whither I now wantinge a lodginge, he be one of those that will interteine a man of free cost at the ¹²⁰ signe of the Cudgell. Or yt may 'be it is some pittifull gentleman, that knowinge my master hath made me watch for the one halfe of the night, he wilbe soe good as laie me a-sleep for the other. I doe not lyke his looke; for the sone of god, what a sturdie knave yt is to see to!
- M. [*Aside.*] In good time, Sir. Well, now will I advance my voyce a lytle that he maie heare me.—In faith, gentle Cudgell, you haue done me seruice to speake of this moneth; mutch about that time yt was when yow laid nyne asleepe altogether.
- S. His Cudgell and he are verie familiar, as yt semes; I ¹³⁰ praie God I be not drawne into the acquaintance, to. Let me see; yt has laid nyne asleepe, as he saies, alreadye. Tis an odd number, that same nine; tis ten to one and I be not taken up to make it euen.¹
- M. I will; I will staie no longer.
- S. Yt is euen as I said. What the deuill shall I doe?
- M. He shall never scape my fingers.

[†]Fol. 5b.

¹ This sentence is an emendation in place of the following words, crossed out: "if he should take me up for a . . . or soe, to make up the tenth."

- S. Whome doth he meane, thinke you?
- 140 M. Whosoeuer comes next in my walke, he shall haue cudgellinge his bellie full.
- S. I doe not love to eate thus late in the night: he may doe well to bestowe his Almes on them that be hungrie.
- M. Ha, tis a cudgell for the nonce: tis not a haire lighter then it should be.
- S. Nowe he hath waied yt, the next thinge he has to doe is to measure yt upon my shoulders.
- M. What if I giue him but a gentle blowe to cast him in a slumber?
- 150 S. Then yt saues my lief, for I want nothinge but Sleepe.
- M. But what talk I of this? My Cudgell, I knowe, cannot giue a gentle blowe; yt neuer toucht man yet but yt mardo the fashion of his face.
- S. Thats well; then, belyke, I am to haue a newe face. I had even as live keepe my ould still, thoughe yt be none of the best. This were the onely fellowe in the world for Dromio to meet withall; he is sure he cannot haue a wurse. At a venture, would he were now in my rome.
-¹
- 160 †M. Is there not a voice come flyinge to my eares?
- S. Has my voice winges, then? An I had knowne soe much before, I could haue clipt them, by my voices leave.
- M. It is some villeinie, sure, that I must be faine to lade with blowes.
- S. A good iest. I can scarce get emptie, I am so wearie; how shall I doe, thinke yee, when I am laden?
-²
- M. O I see him now; heare he comes towardes me.
- S. I begin to feele my-self in a monstrous euill takinge; I
- 170 must needes confesse I can scarce tell where I am. As for my Lordes message, thats scard out of my head by this time. But yet I will set a good face³ ont', and speake as

¹ The following is here crossed out:

M. Come, my cudgell is wood madd to bee at him.

S. Ant' be soe madd, would you wold tame yt a lytle on the wall first, eare yt byte my shoulders.

† Fol. 6 a.

² The following is here crossed out:

M. Hark, methinkes I heare some scurrie fellowe talkinge.

S. An his name be Dromio, good enough, my name ys Sosia.

³ Looks like "fact" in MS.

well as my hart will giue me leave, to make him the more unwilling to medle with me.

M. Sirra, whither walke you there, you with the horne & the lanterne?

S. (*Inversio ex pauore*) A man might breake a iest now, an yt were soe convenient, and saie, "Horne an you will, but lanterne in your face." But I will forbear for this once, yet he shall not goe unanswered neyther.—Si-Si-Sir, what haue you to doe that are a maker of newe faces? 180

M. Sirra, tell me in fewe wordes, from whence you come, whose you are, and whither you goe.

S. In as fewe as you would wish, Sir: I come from hence, Sir, I am my maisters man, and am goeing hither. I thinke you are answered.

M. Answered, indeed, after a fashion, but I will bridle that tounge of yours an yee answere me no hansomer.

S. You seeme to mistake me, Sir. I am no horse that my tounge should be bridled. 190

M. I beleive I shall make you a horse or some such thinge (you knowe my meaninge) yet ere you and I parte.

S. Ha, Ha, He! I dare saie you meane an Asse, Sir.

M. I am gladd you are mery, Sir. But you will tell, I am sure, for all this, what busines you haue heare.

S. Nay then, Sir, what busines haue you heare?

M. I will not shirke to tell you, Sir. I ame one of the watch appointed here for this night.

†S. Tis well done. When Enimies are abroad watch and ward should be kept at home. But I'faith, Master watch-200 man, an you be a good fellowe, tell them within that one of their famylie is come.

M. I knowe not how you meane, Sir, 'one of their familie,' but an you be not gone the soner, I feare me I shall use you somewhat to familiarlie.

S. Begone, quoth he; whie I tell you, man, here I dwell, and here I am servaunte.

M. And I tell you, staie but a lytle longer, Ile make you be carryed awaie as if you were maister.

S. How meane you that, Sir? 210

M. Mary, with state, upon mens shoulders, if I but once lifte up this cudgell.

- S. Doe what you will, Sir, but I saie still, and will main-
teine, that I am one of this houshold.
- M. Yow wilbe gone?
- S. Will yow let one from comeinge into their owne house?
- M. Is this your house?
- S. It is, I will stand to yt.
- M. I praie the, whoe is the maister, canst thou tell?
- 230 S. Amphitruo, the generall of the Theban Army, husband to
Alcumena.
- M. Amphitruo thy maister? Tell me then, whats thy name?
- S. I am called, at home, Sosia; ould Dauus was my father.
- M. Out upon the, villeine! Comest thou hither with soe
many lies patcht together?
- S. Indeed my Coate may be patcht, but I knowe not what
you meane by patchinge of lyes.
- M. Your cote may be facet to, maie yt not? Well, for your
patchinge and faceinge I will giue you a bombastinge to, to
230 teach you to speake truelye here-after.
- S. But how an a man will not be bombasted?
- M. But how an a man cannot chuse? [*Mercury beats him.*]
- S. Hei, heu, hoi! I beseech you, Sir.
- M. Darest thou saie to me, villeine, thou art Sosia, when I
my-self am Sosia?
- †S. Alas, what shall I doe?
- M. Naie, this is but a lytle of the best to that that is beside.
Now, Sir, an a man may aske you, whose are you, I praie you?
- S. O yours, Sir, youres, I were your colors heare, none but
240 youres, Sir. You haue taken me, me-thinkes, into your
owne handes.
- M. Tell me, then, wherefore are you come?
- S. Tis plaine, Sir; I marvell you will aske the question.
Yow see yourself,—to be beaten.
- M. Ile beate you better yet an you answere me not the
soner. Whose man are yow once againe?
- S. An I will tell you once againe, I am Amphitruo his man
Sosia.
- M. What? Againe Sosia? [*Beats him again.*]
- 250 S. Murder! murder! Some honest Theban come helpe me.
- M. Your bawlinge shall not helpe you. I tell the yet againe,
I am Sosia.

†Fol. 7 a.

- S. An you be not, would you were els for me, that yow might be as suerly cudgelled as Sosia is.
- M. Now tell me once more, whoe is your maister?
- S. Even whome yow will, Sir.
- M. And what might be your name?
- S. Now be you my godfather, Sir, I prairie you; giue me what name you will. I think you had best call me Stockfish instead of Sosia, for yow seeme to take me for no lesse. 230
- M. This ys you that said even now you were Sosia, yow Amphitruo his man.
- S. I confesse, Sir, my tonge tript; I would not haue said Sosia; I would haue said, 'Soe as you saie.'
- M. I knew he had no servaunte Sosia but my-self. I thinke thou wert not well in thy wyttes.
- S. May a man but speake to you, Sir, by your good leaue, a word or twoe of free cost, without payinge for yt?
- M. Goe to; I am content to make truce with the for a tyme.
- S. Sweare you will not touch me, then. 270
- M. Trust me of my word; I will not.
- S. And soe I may, now I remember me, for hither-to you haue kept yt with me; but how if you breake yt now?
- †M. Then let Mercury be Sosia his mortall Enemy.
- S. Well, now I maie speake what I list, I am Amphitruo his man Sosia.
- M. You are, Sir? [Beats him.
- S. Sir, you haue made truce with me, and are bound by your worde, and I speak nothinge but truth.
- M. I care not for that. 280
- S. Nay, use me as you please; I confesse you are the better man. Yet I will neuer deny while I liue but that I am Sosia, one of the servauntes of this house, who with my fellow Dromio went from hence with our Lord Amphitruo.
- M. Out of doubt I see now thou art not well in thy wyttes.
- S. Good Lord, Sir, that you will deny that I am my maisters Sosia! Did not our ship come this night from the Haven? Did not my Master send me hither? Doe I not stand now before our house? Have I not a lanterne in my hande? Doe I not speak? Am I not awake? Haue I not bene well 290 cudgelled? What should let me then to goe straight into our house?

†Fol. 7 b.

M. Your house?

S. I, our house; soe I saie, doe what you will.

M. Villeine, thou hast lyed hitherto in every worde thou hast spoken, for I am that Sosia that went with Amphitruo from hence, that was present at the action, sawe the towne deliuered, knowe that my Lord killed kinge Pterelas with his owne hands.

300 S. [*Aside.*] How now? Nay, then, I will not beleve myself that I am Sosia, an he goe on thus a lytle further.—But I praie you, Sir, an a man may speake without correccion, you saie you were by at the deliury of the towne; can you tell a man what present was giuen Amphitruo by the Teleboians?

M. The cup that kinge Pterelas himself was wonte to drinke in.

S. [*Aside.*] He hath tould yt.—But, an you will not be angrie for askinge, Sir, where might this cupp be?

M. Tis sealed up in a Caskett with Amphitruo his owne seale.

310 S. O infynite! I beseech you, Sir, but the seale?

M. The Sonne rysinge, drawne in an Azure coach with foure flame-colored horses.

S. [*Aside.*] By Jupiter, he hath put me downe by plaine Argumentes. I must be faine to goe gett me a 'newe name, for any-thinge I see. Yet I cannot Imagine where he should learne all this. But now I remember my-self, I will aske him one thinge he shall never be hable to tell me while he liues,—that I did alone in the tente when no christian mann was by me.—Sir, if yow be Sosia, when the legions had bene
320 a good while in chace of the Enimý, what did you alone when you came to your lordes tente? Tell me but that, and I yeeld for ever.

M. I ran to a hoggshead of wyne and filled a bottle.

S. [*Aside.*] He is in the waie alreadye.

M. Then sat me downe upon a feilde-bedd by, & drunke yt of, every dropp.

S. [*Aside.*] True, by the Lord, true; unles he were then in the bottom of the bottle I cannot gesse how the devill he should knowe yt.

330 M. Now, Sir, haue I convinced you by sufficient proofes that I am Sosia?

S. You saie you are, Sir.

- M And have reason to, I thinke.
- S. (Lachrymanter) But I durst be sworne by Jupiter that I am Sosia.
- M. And I dare sweare by Mercury that Jupiter will beleeeve me of my worde, before he will beleue the on thy othe.
- S. I beseech you, Sir, doe but tell me whoe should I be, as you thinke, if I be not Sosia?
- M. Sir, when I leaue to be Sosia, you maie be he for any-³⁴⁰ thinge I knowe; in the meane-time be gone presently, or els you knowe what will followe.
- S. As I liue, when I looke upon him he is soe lyke me that me¹-thinke I see my-self in a glasse. His hatt, his clothes are lyke myne, His legge, his foote, his stature, his nose, his lippes, his cheekes, his beard, every parte of him. What should I saie more? (iterum Lachrymanter) If he haue as manie blowes on his shoulders as I haue to, there were never twoe egges lyker one another. And yet me-thinke on the other side, when I Remember my-self, I³⁵⁰ was neuer, that I can call to mynde, but the same man. I remember my maister; I knowe his house; I am not a-sleepe; I am not drunke: whie then should not I be Sosia? I am Sosia, & I will goe into our house, that I will.
- M. Whither now, Sir?
- S. To our house.
- M. Yet againe, 'our house'? Get yow gone quicker without more wordes, you had best, or els Ile make youre skynne of more colors then the walls of your house.
- †S. May not I tell my mistres what my Master badd me? ³⁶⁰
- M. Goe tell your mistres what you liste. As for her that dwells here, she is my mistres, and if you see her to-daie yt shall cost you dearlie.
- S. Nay, Ile be gone first; t'has cost me enough already; would you bare parte of my charges! [*Aside.*] Lord in heuen, what a thinge is this! Whats become of me, trowe yee? When did I loose my-self? When was I chaunged? Did I leaue my-self yonder & perhapps forgett yt? For he hath all the shape I haue heare as iust as a hayre. Well, I will returne to my maister, and let him knowe of all that³⁷⁰ hath past; if he hath forgotten me, to, I will even to the fonte and unchristen my-self againe.

¹ Written "my" in MS.

† Fol. 8 b.

SCEN II

MERCURIUS SOLUS

(Hilariter)

Hitherto our busines goes forward well, and I thinke I
 haue done my father good seruice. But all is not done
 yet; there is another blocke to remoue. For Amphitruo,
 longing to comforte his wief with these gladd tydings of
 his vyctorie, despatches his man Dromio presentlie after
 Sosia in another shipp, that if one should chance to
 miscarry the other might happilie aryue in time. Sosia
 arryued, as you see, in an evill houre, and, with a flea in
 his eare, is sent backe againe. Now Dromio his shipp by a
 10 sodene tempest was brought into such distresse that hardlie
 the villeine escaped shipwracke. But this was my fathers
 doeinge, least if one hadd to sodenly arryved after the
 other, yt might haue bredd some disturbance to our busi-
 nes. Now is he comeing hard by, as Jocund as maie for
 his escape, and especyallie bycause he bringes a ringe for
 a token from his maister to his mistres, and Sosia had
 none, whome his hope is yet to preuent, and gett the
 maidenhead of his mistresses thanks for his good tydings.
 But this ringe of his must I haue by some deuise from
 20 him, and then send him after his fellowe Sosia. And here
 he comes.

SCEN III

1 DROMIO

MERCURIUS

(Dromio in habitu nautico, quo difficilius videri possit à socio
 cognosci.)

D. Goe to Sea, quoth he! An ever I goe to sea againe Ile
 saie nothinge but let me be hang'd as sone as I come on
 Land. Trust the water who will for all Dromio; an
 they trust yt neuer soe longe I am sure of one thinge,
 they shall finde yt but a 'slippery thinge in the ende.
 Well, there was neuer man of my place, as yt were a kind
 of Bassiter now from a generall, that skapet drown-

inge soe narrowlie as I did. And yet now I am on lande me-thinkes I could even all-most laugh at the fine sporte the winde made with our shipp upon the water. We had ¹⁰ dauncinge, I'faith, our bellies full, some of us. I neuer see the lyke without minstrells in my lief. They talke of the backetricke: I'faith, our shipp fetcht the backe-tricke backward and forward, to, I hope neuer to see the lyke againe. The mayepole snikepace, otherwise called the wheelinge galyard, was a thinge of nothinge, tryckes of .15. or .16. score and upwarde, twoe or thre furlonge hie, but a tryfle. And this was shire dauncinge, besides tumblinge and other strange feates of Artillery. In the meane-time we in the shippe practized the Amonde leape from one ²⁰ ende to the other. But I must needes confesse all did yt not alyke, for some pytcht on their feete, some on their handes, others of the better wyttes thought yt not amys to light on their heades, some on their backes, others on their shoulders.¹ As for our sayles, poore sailes, they were blowne in peices for all the world lyke wafer cakes. And the maine maste snapt in twoe, (*actione, hoc exprimat contraria, lignum aliquod aut simile tractans pro scirpo*) as I would snapp a rush. I'faith, I, and then blowne quite out of sight; how saie you by that? For indeed yt was soe ³⁰ darke we could not see one another. Nay, and howe we were cozoned! I would not haue said once 'God a marcy' to him that would haue said to me, 'Dromio, what wilt thou giue me if I will carry the quicke to heauen.' Whie, we were descended once so neare the verye skye, look ye, or the ferment it-self, that if our shipp had had but hir mast still, to haue made a whole there, lord, yt had bene the easiest leape in the worlde. But see the deserte of pride—pride will haue a fall, saith the poet. Soe had we. We despised to heauen; what came on't? Marry, we ⁴⁰ came downe againe with a vengeance into such a horrible untestable abominacion, fye on't, I am afraide to thinke on't (mark how I quiner yet, good people), such an uglie black, bottomles hole that I wold willinglie haue growne to exposition with the devill and giuen the foule fien my hinder quarters with all my hart, soe he would haue

¹ The following addition is inserted in the margin at this point: . . . and one did, I take it, the Somersetshire trick fairly ouer; but indeed he near cam back againe.

50 lefte me my head and my fore quarters still. But the mortall gods did resigne me, though unworthie, no doubt, to better misfortune. And what a comfort were yt to me now to knowe that Sosia, that slaue, were sowst as well as I. But me-thinkes this is a pestilent longe night; a man might haue bene hanged and drowned, to, this night, and aliue and drye againe by the morninge. I doe not Remember that ever I sawe soe longe[†] a night, but one when I was once whipt all night: that night was indeed a rodd or twee longer then this. What should a man saie to yt? Are the 9 planettes out of their waie, trowe wee? Let me see; the 7 muses are iust in the same place still, where they were at midnight, iust in the same place, I, 60 mary, are they. But what doe I forget all this while? I am almost at home and yet I haue not pondered with myself, how, when I am come before my mistres, in most unsemely manner, in fewe wordes, to dylate my message unto her.

M. [*Aside.*] I will here him speake his mynde bycause I haue no-thinge els to doe. Yet I meane to ease him of his labor.

D. It were not amisse thus: I, thus, or thus for the most parte. I, what and thus altogether?

70 *Madame, I, Dromio, am the thrise welcome messenger of my Lord and Maisters, your Lord and husbands, most outrageous victory, which was detayned, partly indeed by the policy of the comon souldiers, but most specially by the worthy induct of my Lord and Maister, your Lord and husband, our most vincible generall, who most valyantly and a — wisely, put to the sword kinge Perilous himselfe with his owne hands. I meane, Madame, and the sword in them. I would not haue you take me otherwise. After which most a — strange fact our Enymies were slaine, doe you marke, our focs seduced, and our Aduersaries slautered, euery man, woman 80 and childe, and all the rest taken prisoners.²*

M. [*Aside.*] What, and all slaine to? That was hard Justice.

D. This will serue passinge well, but litle will she thinke when I can tell her thus much, but that I was as knuckle

[†] Fol. 9 b.

² Written in bolder hand to indicate italics.

deepe in the accion as the rest, when god knowes I stood-faire and farre of.

M. [*Aside.*] I, god is thy wytnes.

D. Where I spied that Coward Sosia lurking behind a moule hill, that I was even ashamed to see him. Now if he has⁹⁰ not preuented me I am a made man. And yet, saie he has: alas, he comes in the plaine beaten highe-waie of after my harty commendacions. But I haue here the verie signet, with one of my maisters owne pretious stones, that cannot be but welcome to my Mistris, besides a spetiall, most singuler message, that this hoope he sends as a signe of 'his spotted faith; the Gould should present his crowne of victorie.

M. [*Aside.*] This is iust quite contrarye.

D. Well, here is our house. But whoe is that before our dore thus late in the night? Ile lay my lief tis Sosia, and he is¹⁰⁰ not yet gott in. O, that I knewe that, how I should laugh at him! But, now I remember me, Ile put up my ringe, for tis such a craftie Jacke that if he sett but his eye on't once, he would haue it, he would haue yt, he, or he would cozen me of finger and all. I will make as though I did not knowe him.—What art thou, good fellowe, that art here at this time of night?

M. What sawceboxe is he that askes me this question?

D. [*Aside.*] 'Sawcebox,' quoth he, at the first dash? By the masse, I am vildly affraid I am in a wronge boxe. By the¹¹⁰ phrase, marke ye, this should not be he. Can a man tell whether I had best proceed or noe? This night and if a man shold chaunce to quarrell he might as sone strike, doe you see, his freind as his foe. Well I am dessolued to be ciuill for this once, what-soeuer come ont.—None but a freind of yours.

M. Freind me no freindes. An he be his owne freind he had best spend his time some-where els, and not trouble me that haue other thinges to thinke on.

D. [*Aside.*] Tis he, I'faith; I knowe by that. There be¹²⁰ others have some thinge to thinke on to as well as he. I see by this tyme how I shall put him downe to a-none.—Your freind and fellowe, Sir, goe to.

M. My fellowe?

D. [*Aside.*] He is affraied of me alreadie: I see the slaue

would not be knowne.—I, your fellowe, soe I saie, an your name be Sosia; I knowe you well enough.

M. Are you sure you knowe me?

D. O lord, Sir, ys it not you that laye skulkinge behinde a moule-hill all the time we were a-fighting?

M. [*Aside.*] Ile hould a wager tis Dromio. 'All the time we were a-fighting,' quoth he. —By that same token, thou ranst awaie soe fast that thou lokedst but once behinde the till the battell was done. I'faith, fellowe Dromio, you are soe muffeld up I shold 'scarce haue knowne you in the darke had not you discovered yourself. But you are come in good tyme, for I haue bene a vilde¹ while lookinge for you and after you.

D. For me? And whie for me? A man would thinke you had some-what els to doe.

M. What, man?

D. To lyver a certeine message to my lady Alcumena.

M. Why, man, that message was deliuered fife houres agoe at least. And I haue bene with my lord since to desire a token from him to my lady, for without, she will not beleue me.

D. Marry, I cannot blame her. She has reason, I thinke: beleue the, that saist thou hast bene here & there and there and here againe, and all in fife houres! What a monstrous lye is that! Fellowe Sosia, in fewe wordes, I am ashamed to heare the, but as concerninge foresaid token, sure some rare token, may a man see yt?

M. Whie, I was tellinge of you, if you would haue let me gone on; he badd me make hast to ouertake you, and take of you a certeine ringe he gaue you to deliuer her.

(*Subito² animi consternatio appareat in Dromione*)

D. A ringe of me? You take a ringe of me? I shall never digest yt. You take a halter; I, take my lief first. What should I doe then, can you tell?

M. You presentlie should returne, as I take yt, to haue certeine prisonners Commytted to your charge.

D. I, lyke enough to be a Jailer; I am fitt for nothinge els, I. If I haue the ringe now, I doe not finde in my-self but that I shall kepe yt; kepe you the prisoners an you will; I skorne the trade, I.

[†]Fol. 10 b.

¹ Looks like "wilde" in MS.

² Written "subita" in MS.

- M. Alas, fellowe Dromio, be not offended with me; I doe but my masters message.
- D. A ringe of me? God forgiue me, I shall neuer forgett yt. I doe not thinke he knowes I haue a ringe for all his sayinge, an he were well examyned.
- M. Yes, and can tell you the markes of it to, or els let me ¹⁷⁰ not haue it.
- D. No, you shall not, Ile warrant you. But you can tell the markes, you? Ile try that by and by. If yt haue a stone now, as parenter I, parenter no, what manner of stone maie yt be?
- M. Whie, a faire pointed dyamond.
- †D. A faire pointed dyamond! Ha, ha, he!
- M. Whie, what aile you, man?
- D. 'A faire pointed dyamond'! Ha, ha, he! Nay, you are in the right, you are in the right, you haue hit it; 'a faire ¹⁸⁰ pointed Diamond', quoth he! But that I am angry with him for lyinge, how Could I laugh at him! 'A faire pointed dyamond!' And first, tis an adamant, for soe my lord said himself when he lyuered it to me. Or saie an adamant and a Dyamond be all one, as I do not greatlie stand upon that; he saies tis faire, and the stone is a plaine baie or a sheepes russett, which you will; and he saies tis pointed, and the deuill a pointe is there at yt.
- M. Whie, thou mistakes me, man. Let me see it, and I will shewe the how I meane. 190
- D. It maie be soe, but I doe not meane to let you see yt for all that, unles you can tell me one thinge, bycause you saie you were bidden to take yt. Tell me that, goe to and take yt. [*Aside.*] He will as sone be hanged as he can tell yt.
- M. Whats that?
- D. The message that is to be liuered withall.
- M. This is a strange thinge that we fellowes shold soe mistrust one another.
- D. Nay, neare goe about to synuate by 'we fellowes,' but tell yt, and take yt. 200
- M. An you will needes knowe, he badde me tell her the hoope represented his garland of victorie, the gould his spotles affection.
- D. (dolenter & cum suspirio) I must needes confesse twas

much therabouts, and yet yt cannot sinke into my heade that he could possiblie be there and heare, and heare and there againe, in fve houres. Well, since I haue giuen my word, here take yt. I stand upon my worde, I tell you, fellow Sosia.

210 M. I see you doe, and I commend you for yt.

D. And to saie the truth, tis more to ones imputacion to haue the custodie of prisoners, doe you see, then to lyver a message that euery simple fellowe can doe. Fellowe Sosia, I giue you the ringe with all my harte. But doe you heare, you are sure you were bidden to take yt?

M. Make you a question of yt?

†D. Noe, I do not neither; nay, take yt, I'faith, with all my harte. But you saie you are sure my Lordes honours wourships pleasure is it should be soe?

220 M. Nay, then.

D. Nay, I beleine you. I speake not for that. I'truth you haue it with all my harte.

M. I knowe you haue.

D. I, indeed haue you, for you saie he badd you take yt; but thats all one. But for those same prisoners, can you tell what men of qualitie are amonge them?

M. O, great men, certeine.

D. I'faith?

M. I, I maie tell you theres not one of them but since the
230 last kinges death is next to the crowne.

D. Awaye, awaye! Fellowe Sosia, that same ringe—

M. What of that?

D. I'faith, thou hast yt with all my harte.

M. I make no question on't.

D. But, sirra, euery one next the crowne?

M. Euery one.

D. O rare! And they shall finde me as mylde and seveare a Comaunder as they would wish.

M. I am assured of yt.

240 D. Well, fellowe Sosia, farewell; and thou knowest what I saide? Withall my harte.

M. What needes that? I more then beleine the.

D. Adiew, good fellowe Sosia.

[Exit.

M. Adieu, good fellowe wood-cocke. Soe now we are on

reare bord. Now this foole is but awaie to, here wilbe no sturre a-none, for poore Amphitruo, what with his men and what with his wief, never was vycorious generall soe welcomed home. But since yt soe falls out for my fathers pleasure, he that can do all will in the ende make all good, with a generall contentment, especyally to Amphitruo, ²⁵⁰ whome he will enrich for amendes with twoe worthie, but one incomparable sonne, whoe shalbe named *Hercules*. Both shalbe borne at a time, though they were not conceived at a tyme. But 'soe it is my fathers will to make Alcumenas labour but single for a double birth. In the meane-tyme must I goe on, as my duety is, to doe my father service to the end.

SCEN IIII

JUPITER

ALCUMENA

MERCURIUS

(Remember That the cup be heere in readines.)

- J. Fare-well, my best beloued Alcumena. I praie the look well to thy-self; thy time, thou seest, drawes on a-pace, and that that god sendes us, sweet-harte, make much ont. I must be gone.
- A. Alas, my Lord, whats the reason of this, that you are gone soe sone againe?
- J. Not, my loue, that I am weary of thee, or of beinge at home, but how can all doe well with soe greate an Army when tis without a generall?
- M. [*Aside.*] My father is excellent at this counterfeytinge;¹⁰ marke him, I praie you, how queintlie he comes in with 'Alcumena'.
- A. I may see by this how litle you care for me.
- J. It is enough if there be none under the sonne I care for soe much.
- A. I had rather see this then here of yt. Our bed is scarce warme, yet twas midnight when you came, and you are gone alreadie. I, could this be, if you loued me as you saie?
- M. [*Aside.*] I thinke I had best stepp in and help my

†Fol. 12a.

- 20 father.—Madame, I doe not thinke, if I should be put to swere, that euer man in this world loued woman soe well as my master doth you.
- J. Now, sir, who sent for you? You must be prating.
- A. Good my Lord, I praie you doe not——
- J. Mumble, you had best.
- M. [*Aside.*] I doe not lyke this begining half well.
- J. But, my dearest Alcumena, what reason hast thou to be angrie with me? Did I not steale this tyme from my whole Army, to bestowe yt on the, that by my owne mouth thou mightest first understand how all hath succeeded? Would I haue done thus, thinkes thou, if I did not loue the?
- 30 M. [*Aside.*] Could a man deuise to flatter more coningly?
- †J. Now I must needes priuillie Convey my-self backe againe, as I stole awaie, that it be not knowne, which I would not for any thinge.
- A. I knowe not how you will goe. I am sure you make me weepe to see you gone soe sone.
- J. I pray the, be contente; I will presently retorne againe.
- A. I, that ‘presently’ will be to longe.
- 40 J. Doest thou thinke yt pleases me to part from the, if I could chuse?
- A. No, yt is not lykely, when you goe awaie the same night you came.
- J. Whie doest thou hould me? I must needes be gone before the daie appeare. In the meane-time, for a pawne of my speedie retorne, and a remembrance while I am awaie, I will giue the the same cuppe kinge Pterelas himself dranke in, whome I slewe.
- (Cupp)
- A. I had rather haue you staie.
- 50 J. Thou seest I cannot.—Sirra, bringe the cupp hither I gaue you to keepe.
- M. Here, Sir.
- J. How now, Alcumena; how lyke you this?
- A. This is guift indeed lyke him that gaue yt.
- M. Or rather, Madame, lyke her tis giuen unto.
- J. Sirra, will you neuer hould your peace?
- A. Good Amphitruo, be not angrie with Sosia, for my sake.
- J. I am content for this once.

- M. [Aside.] Lord, how fearse my father is growne with this
same loue. 60
- J. Haste thou any-thinge now to comaunde me?
- A. I would intreat you, Sir, to loue me still when you are
gone, though I be absent.
- M. Sir, tis more then time we were gone, for daie begins to
peepe.
- J. Goe you before, sir; Ile come after you. [*Exit Mer-*
cury.].—What wilt thou els?
- A. Nothinge but that you returne as sone as you can.
(*Illa dolenter incedit*)
- J. I warrant the I wilbe here eare thou lokest for me.
Farewell. [*Exit Alcumena.*].—Now, night, thou hast staid 70
my leasure this longe, I giue the leaue to giue place to daie,
and soe much as thou wert longer then thou shouldest be,
soe much shorter be the next daie that order may be kept
still. Now I followe Mercury.

†ACTUS SECUNDUS

SCEN I

ALCUMENA

THESSALA

A. They talk of pleasure, but the pleasure of a womans lief, I am sure, is litle enough if yt be compared with her crosses. The seueare stricktnes of our educacion, the bondage after, if our husbandes be not better, the wrongfull suspicions and accusations to, now and then we passe through in our lief time, the paine we endure before we haue children, the care after, the generall weaknes of our sexe,—these be ordinary complaintes of all weomen. But there is one crosse that mostly attendes, though not onely, upon us that are the greater, and it is the greater crosse,—the ordinarie absence of our husbandes, which in the manner is dobled to. For were they absent onely in ambassage, or as traueylers, or as merchantes, yet they might leaue us hart-easinge hope at home to accompanie us till their returne. But beinge absent as souldiers they leaue us pale feare, a passion that we are lesse hable to endure then greif. They might as well quite leaue us, for our greatest greif is to feare, and tis feare thats death to us. If we be dead once what can sorowe doe us harme? What saieth thou, Thessala, is not this true? I knowe thou lonest not Sosia soe litle but thou hast hadd a taste of eich of these since he was last with the.

T. Indeed, Madame, I must needes confesse the truth, I haue. And though we be not married together, I am sure his absence, beinge in so daungerous an ymployment especyallie, hath gone as nere my hart as if we had bene. And if I durst, when your Ladiship has sighed some-times, I could haue found in my harte to haue borne you companie. O, there cannot be such a crosse in the world to a woman as

† Fol. 13 a.

to parte from her husband. Whie, Mistres, he is the hus-³⁰
band of her bosome; when he is gone, alas, how can she
but be naked? He is her propp and uphoulder; take him
awaie, she cannot chuse but fall. Besides, a souldier is to
his wief a sheild and a buckler to; remoue him, and she
will lye open straight to all assaultes.

A. T'were pittie but thou haddest a husband, Thessala; thou
couldst perswade him soe well to staie at home.

T. I, and t'were not for Sosia and my maister (I cry you
mercy, mistres)—my master and Sosia, I should haue
saide—I would not care if all these souldiers were hanged, ⁴⁰
to giue example 'to others to keepe better at home with
their wiues.

A. That were to hard, Thessala; rather thou shouldest wish
them lamed, soe they should be sure to staie at home.
[*Aside.*] She makes me merry to heare hir how earnest
she is, and yet I can not put awaie the thought of my
lordes so sodeine departure.—Thessala, goe you in; I will
followe you. [*Exit Thessala.*] To staie but one poore
night! nay, had it bene all that, that were some-thinge.
But one peice of a night! I, and that a litle peice to! ⁵⁰
[*Walking up and down.*] Now am I more discontented
with his departure then me-thought I was ioyed with his
comeinge. Yet this, I must needes saie, comfortes me not
a litle—the honour my Lord hath gotten by his victorie.
To heare him soe well spoken of by every-bodie! And if
we weomen loue honour soe well as men saie we doe, then
must this needs be pleasinge unto us, to heare them mag-
nified, whoe beinge parte of us, cannot chuse but part their
honours with us. Yet me-thinkes to, honour, to saie the
truth, is but a shadowe, and shadowes please children and ⁶⁰
fooles indeed. But giue me the substance. The eye is the
truest harbinger of loue. I had rather see my Lord still,
I, then heare of him. But now I must be content; t'will
not be longe ere he returne; I, soe he said to please me.
Well, I see walkinge will not put out this melancholie out
of my heade. I will goe in and trye another while what
working can doe.

SCEN II

AMPHITRUO

SOSIA

- A. Come your waies after me.
- S. I will followe you, Sir, I warrant you, hard at the heeles.
- A. I doe not thinke there was ever yet such a villeyne hard of as this.
- S. Whie soe, Sir, I beseech you?
- A. Whie, thou wouldest make me beleieue that, that neither is, nor was, nor can be.
- S. This is your ould wont not to beleue your poore seruantes, speake they neuer soe truely.
- 10 A. Sirra, doe not iustifie this; you had best an you doe.
- S. Nay, the lawe is in your handes; use me as you thinke good. Yet you shall neuer make me affraied to tell you what I see with these eyes.
- †A. Why, thou shameles slaue, darest thou saie to me that thou art now at home that art here?
- S. Sir, I dare saie it, and will stand to it, that it is most true.
- A. Doest thou longe for a beatinge?
- S. For that as yt please you, Sir. I am yours, yet I must not, nor will not, be affraied to speake the truth.
- 20 A. Doest thou but thinke what it is to floute thy maister? Darest thou affirme to me soe certainly that which yet neuer man sawe, that one man should be in twoe places?
- S. Sir, as I haue tould you, soe you shall finde yt.
- A. What, that thou art here and there to, man? Wilt thou stand to this?
- S. And you proue me a lyer, then speake your pleasure; in the meane-tyme, would you would not thinke of me otherwise then I haue deserued.
- A. Out of doubt this fellowe is drunke.
- 30 S. Would I were els for my owne sake.
- A. Nay, then, I warrant the thou hast thie wish.
- S. Haue I, Sir?
- A. I, and you had best tell me, to, where you drunke last.
- S. It may be you will not beleieue me, but Ile be sworne I drunk not since I was last in your tent.
- A. What might this meane?

- S. Alas, Sir, I haue tould you often enough, and will tell you againe, an yt will doe you anie good. I, Sosia, am now at home, but I, the same, am here with you. This is plaine enough, I thinke. 40
- A. Well, I see then thou art madde¹; it is no more dealinge with the.
- S. Sir, I am well in my wytt, what-soeuer you thinke, and knowe what I saie well enough.
- A. Then shalt thou be hanged for lyinge. Tis a plaine case: thou hast neglected to doe my commaundement, and now thou thinkest to come & flapp me in the teeth with such a lye. As thou doest me more wronge in thinkinge I will beleieue yt then in bare tellinge of it to excuse thie-selfe, confesse the truth, you had best. 50
- S. Can a poor servaunte endure greater misery then this, when he tells the truth to be ouer-borne by forse?
- †A. Whie, I praie the, come and reason the matter with me a lytle, if perchance thou hast any reason; how doest thou thinke yt can possiblie be that thou shouldest now be both here and at home at the same time.
- S. Tis enough, Sir, that I knowe I am both here and there. And you may maruell as much as you will, and when you haue done, you maruell not more then I maruell at it my-self. 60
- A. How?
- S. Marry, I saie, I maruell at yt as much as you, for by this good light I did [not?] at the first beleieue this Sosia my-self, untill I my-self that am there did make me beleieue him, he did soe perfytlie tell me what-soeuer was done here. Besides he has my shape as well as my name. And, Sir, proue that one dropp of milke be lyker an-other then he and I are together, and take this head from my shoulders. Whie, I will tell you—Sir, when you sent me from the haven, would you thinke yt? 70
- A. What?
- S. I was at home a great while before I came there.
- A. Doest thou understand thy-self well what thou saiest?
- S. Me-thinkes I speake soe plainlie, sir, that any man may understand me.
- A. [*Aside.*] I cannot tell what to make of this: some-times

¹ Written "made" in MS.

† Fol. 14 b.

me-thinkes he should be drunck, sometimes madd, or perhaps he is bewicht.—Hath not some unlucky hand light upon the?

90 S. Yes, that there hath, a couple, on my word. For I was neuer better beaten since my name was Sosia.

A. Who should beat the?

S. I, sir, that am at home beat my-self.

A. Can a man endure this any longer? Sirra, answer me a question or twoe, and se you speake not a word but as I ask you. First, this same Sosia you speak of, what should he be?

S. He is your man.

A. My man, villeine? Whie I haue to many of the name by the alreadie, and but the I had neuer any in my lief.

S. Well, this Sosia is your man, and see you shall finde him when you come home. I, he is Dausus his sonne; he has my face; he is of my yeares. In a word, Sir, your Sosia is no longer a single but a double Sosia.

A. Thou tellst me strange thinges; but didst thou se my wief?

S. How could I see hir when I could not be suffred to come in?

†A. Whoe let the?

S. That same Sosia I tould you of.

100 A. What Sosia, man?

S. I, my-self, Sir; how often shall I tell you? I would haue beleiued you in half this time.

A. Tell me, didst thou not sleepe latelie?

S. Not I, Sir.

A. Art thou sure ont? Perhaps in a dreame thou mightest see all this.

S. Tis not my wont, Sir, see sleepilie to doe your busines. I tell you I was watchinge when I see him, and he was watchinge when he watcht me a good time, and beat me almost asleep for watchinge soe late.

110

A. Whoe beate the?

S. Nay, then, we shall neuer have done. In fewe wordes, Sir, I beat my-self; doe you not yet understand me?

A. Understand the? Who could understand such a madd foole as thou art, that talkest thus Idlely of thinges impossible?

- S. Be content a while, Sir, and you shall see how impossible they bee.
- A. What shall I see?
- S. The fore-said Sosia, your man. 120
- A. Well, come your waies after me. You haue brought that I badd you out of the ship?
- S. I haue yt here readie for you, Sir.
- A. We shall see anone, I hope, what this geare will come to.

SCEN III

ALCUMENA
SOSIA

AMPHITRUO
THESSALA

(Remember That the casket be in readines.)

- Al. [*Aside.*] This workinge makes me thinke of Penelope, how prettie a deuice she found, good Lady, to preserve herself against soe manie temptations, in soe longe absence of her beloued Vlisses. No doubt she wrought lyke a work-woman haueinge accustomed her hand to it. I make wise worke, now my mynde is of another matter.
- †Am. It ioyes me to thinke how kinde a welcome I shall haue of my faire and lovinge Alcumena after my longe absence: poore soule, I dare saie she has thought it longe. But the good successe I bringe with me, and the honour of my vic-¹⁰tory, that shall plead my excuse.
- S. I hope we shall finde them will bidd us welcome to.
- Al. [*Aside.*] Is not yon my husband?
- Am. Sirra, se you followe me.
- S. I doe not meane, Sir, to goe before you.
- Al. [*Aside.*] What might the cause be of his soe suddaine returne? I hope he doth yt but to trie me, how much I desire his presence. And well may he think he shalbe welcome.
- S. Sir, I thinke yt were even best for us to goe backe²⁰ againe to our shipp.
- Am. And whie soe, Sir?
- S. For we are lyke to haue no dynner here: I see my ladies belly yonder is full alreadie.

† Fol. 15 b.

Am. Indeed yt should be soe, for I lefte her quicke when I went last from hence.

Al. [*Aside.*] It is my duety to goe towards him.

Am. Amphitruo salutes his welbeloued wief, whome all Thebes reporte of for her vertue. What saies Alcumena?

30 Am I welcome?

Al. I hope, Sir, you make no doubt of your welcome, though you please to aske me the question.

Am. It doth me good to see this faire bellie soe well risen, since I see the last.

Al. It semes, my Lord, you are disposed to be merry; and ys it soe longe, I praie you, since you see me laste?

Am. Ever since I set forth out of Thebes with our Army, tis soe longe.

Al. Whie saie you soe, Sir?

40 Am. Bycause I haue learned of a boye to speake truth, wief; wouldest thou haue me tell a lye?

Al. Sir, you doe well to keep that lesson still. But would I might be soe bould as to ask you in earnest what makes you returne soe speedie; you tould me, but even now, you must in all hast be gonne back to your Armye.

Am. How, even now?

†Al. Doe you this to try me? Even very now, but a while since.

Am. How doest thou meane 'but a while since?'

50 Al. Sir, though it please you to make me your playe-fellowe at other tymes, I am now in good earnest. And doe you make strange of yt, that I saie you went but euen now from hence?

Am. Out of doubtt this woman dotes.

S. O, tis nothinge, Sir but want of sleepe in impatience for your absence; staie but till she hath slept a litle, and Ile warrant you she wilbe better come to her-self.

Al. Truely, I thank the godes I need no sleepe, but am well aduised what I saie, and well knowe that both he and you
60 were here with me this night, and gone againe by breake of daie.

Am. In what place?

Al. Here in your house where you dwell.

Am. Doe not saie soe, for we were neuer here.

†Fol. 16 a.

- S. O, Sir, you maie be deceiued. What if our shipp brought us hither asleepe and we neuer knewe of yt?
- Am. Must you helpe the matter to?
- S. [*Aside.*] I helpe her, quoth he. I'faith, tis but in charytie. She is madd alreadie, and doe but crosse her a lytle it is the next waie to put her quite out of her witts. 70
- Am. [*Aside.*] I cannot take this in good parte, that returninge but now where I expected soe much kindnes after soe longe absence, she would not soe much as salute me.—Wief, I praie the, tell me one thinge.
- Al. What, Sir, I praie you?
- Am. Is it pride—this in you, or extremitie of folly?
- Al. What meane you to aske me this, Sir?
- Am. Bycause you were wonte ever when I hadd bene abroad,e, kindelie to welcome me at my comeinge home; me-thinkes that fashion is quite forgotten now. 80
- Al. I am sure, Sir, I did salute you at your firste Comeinge as kindly as I could.
- S. Did you salute him, Madame? When, I praie you?
- Al. I, and you to, Sosia; tis not soe longe since that you should forgett yt.
- †S. Well, master, I am sory for nothings but for your Childe there.
- Am. Whie for my Childe, man?
- S. Twill proue a madd childe, and 'take after the mother.
- Al. Whats that, sir, that you saie? 'After the mother?' 90
- S. Nothings, I, Madame, but that I wish your childe may no[t] take after the mother.
- Al. And whie not after the mother?
- S. O, madame, bycause my Lord hath soe often wisht for a boye; yt should be a girle an it should take after you.
- Am. Sirra, hould your pratinge. Tell me, wief, are you sure you see me here yesternight?
- Al. Sir, I did, and marvell much whie you should soe often aske me the question.
- Am. In your dreame, perhapps. 100
- Al. Even as broade awake as I see you now.
- Am. Alas, what shall I doe?
- S. Whie, what ails you, Sir?
- Am. My wief, questionles, is madd.

S. Doe but let her bloud a litle in the braine, and, of my worde, she wilbe sober straight.

Am. Woman, tell me where didst thou feele this humor first seaze upon the?

Al. I cannot tell what humor you meane. I am sure I never
110 found my-self better then at this present, savinge my greif to finde soe strange usage at your handes, where I haue litle deserued yt.

Am. What shall I saie? I am angrie to heare her talke, and yet yt greues me to see her weepe.

S. O, let her weepe, Master. This is the lettinge of her braine bludd; tis the onely waie to make her come to herself againe.

Am. Well, weepe or weepe not. I must enquire further into this matter, thats certeine. Can you saie that I was here
120 yesternight that came but this night into the haven, where I supt, where I slept all night, and set not foot on shore till this morninge?

Al. I saie you supt and slept with me to-night.

Am. Nay, then, let that be true yet that I supt with the, but for the loue of god, doe not saie I slept with the.

Al. Yes, but soe sone as it was daie you returned backe to your Army againe.

†S. Just this is the first parte of her dreame.—Madam,
130 I'faith, when you awaked did you not thanke god for your sweet dreame?

Al. I hope though it please my Lord to use me as he thinkes good, he will not allow you, sirra, to controule me. I haue sene him angrie with you in my time for a lesse matter then this.

Am. Sir, an I bidd you hould your peace againe—Say you that I did goe awaie from you this morninge?

Al. I, and before your goeinge tould me your-self the whole manner of your victorie.

Am. Are you sure you knowe yt?

140 Al. If it be as you tould me, I am sure.

Am. As howe? Let us heare some parte of yt.

Al. First, how you put them to flight, and in the execucion kild the kinge your-self, and after tooke them that remained aliuie, to mercy.

Am. Did I tell you this?

Al. Sir, you did: how should I knowe it els? Besides he was by when you tould me it.

Am. How saie you, Sir; did you here me tell her this?

S. Where should I heare you tell it?

Am. Nay, aske her.

150

S. I will not flatly deny yt, bycause she hath said yt, but if it were soe tis more then I can Remember.

Al. Indeed yt were a mervell if he would saie any-thinge to crosse you.

Am. Sirra, looke hither; looke me full in the face.

S. I thinke this is full, Sir.

Am. Sir, leaue your knavery, you had best, and tell me truely; neuer speake to please me: did I, in your hearinge, tell any of these thinges to your Mistris?

S. Sir, I praie you, are you in as good case as she, that you aske me this question?

Am. Sirra, tell me directlie, without more adoe, did I or no? (Minanter offerendo alapam)

S. Noe, Sir, no, not I. 'I hard you,' quoth he? Nor any bodie els thats wise, I thinke.

Am. Doe you heare what he saies?

Al. I heare him well.

Am. And will you neither beleue him nor me?

†Al. Saveinge my duetie to you, Sir, I will beleue none before my owne eyes.

Am. Doe you saie still that I came hither yester-night? 170

Al. Doe you still deny, Sir, that you went from hence this morninge?

Am. I saie, and swere yt to, by the kinge of heauen; this is the first hour of my arryvall here since I went from hence with our Army.

Al. And will you denye to, what you left me for a remembrance at your partinge?

Am. What was that?

Al. A standinge Cupp of gould, which, as you said, was giuen you for a present.

180

Am. I neyther gaue you one, nor ever said soe much to you that I would. Indeed it hath bene my purpose to giue you such a one. But who tould you thus much? Ile laie my lief

†Fol. 17 b.

Dromio hath bene with you, for I sent him out time enough to haue bene here by this time, and I neare see him since.

S. Ile warrant you, Sir, tis none but he that hath plaide the knaue with you in all this. [*Aside.*] I think I haue spoken for him.

Al. I knowe not when you sent him, but I am sure I see him
190 not yet. And if he had bene here, you knowe best whither he could giue me the cupp or no.

Am. Staie a litle, for gods loue. Thys makes me wonder yet of all the rest, unles you, Sirra, haue plaied the villaine with me, and priuillie acquainted her with this before my comeinge, and then come and tell me I cannot tell what deuises of your owne.

S. Nay, an eare you proue that, Sir, you said you would hang me before, then let me be quartered to.

Am. What shall I saie to this?

200 Al. Shall I cause my woman to fetch yt?
(Casket.)

Am. Let me see yt.

Al. You shall, Sir.—Thessala!

T. Whats your will, Madame?

Al. Bringe me the cupp hither I tould you my Lord gaue me at his goeing awaie. Whie doe you not make more hast? Bid Ragazzo come, to.

(*Hic signis agunt mutuis inter se, Sosia & Thessala.*)

T. Presentlie, Madame. [*Exit.*]

Am. Come hither, you. Where is your minde, Sir? Whie, this would make me wonder of all the rest, if she should chance
210 to haue this cupp.

†S. Lord, will you beleieue that, when you knowe tis here fast under locke and key, and under your owne seale?

Am. Let me see; is the seale whole?

S. Looke, I praie you, Sir, that you may be sure.

T. [*Re-enter Thessala.*] Here yt is, madame.

S. Howe now?

Al. Now, sir, see your-self whither this be it or noe

Am. O heauens, what doe I see? Tis the verie same.

S. Well, I am sure of one thinge: either she is a witch, or
220 els the cupp must be here still in the Caskett.

Am. Goe to; let us see; open yt quicklie.

- S. You can beare me wytnes, Sir, the seale is whole.
- Am. Very well, Sir:
(Haec inter aperiendum¹)
- S. This is fine sporte. I haue found another Sosia; my maister he heares of another Amphitruo; and there be another cupp here to, I'faith then we are all dubbed. Jupiter, o Jupiter!
- Am. Whats the matter?
- S. O, Jupiter, Jupiter, not a peice of a cupp is there here.
- Am. But you had best, Sir, finde me a cupp there. 230
- Al. Whie, you see tis heare.
- Am. But how came you by it, then?
- Al. Euen by him that askes me the question.
- S. I' faith, master, I beleine you are disposed to plaie the noble man with me: you haue bene here before me, and taken yt out your-self, and sealed up the casket againe, and now you aske me whats become of yt.
- Am. Villeine, doest thou helpe her forward to in her frensie? Doe you saie still that I was here yesternight?
- Al. I saie you were here. 240
- S. And how did you interteine him then?
- Am. Indeed that were a question.
- Al. But sone answered: How should a wief interteine her husband? When you came in first I gaue yow a kysse.
- Am. Beshrowe me, I lyke not this beginninge; but goe on, I praie you.
- †Al. Then you washt.
- Am. What then?
- Al. You satt downe to supper.
- Am. And what after supper? 250
- S. I, maister, aske hir forward; you shall haue good stuff anone, I warrant you.
- Am. Sir, doe not you interrupt us.
- Al. After supper, you found your-self some-thinge weary, and you went to bedd.
- S. I thinke she will come neare you anone.
- Am. Where laye you?
- Al. Where should I lye, but in the same bedd with you?
- Am. In the same bedd? Thou undoeest me if thou saiest soe.
- S. Alas, Sir, what ayle you? 260

¹ Written "aperiundum" in text.

† Fol. 18 b.

Am. She hath wounded me; she hath stabbed me to the hart.

Al. Whie are you thus out of order, Sir? You make me at my wyttes end.

S. [*Aside.*] Thats a small matter; they were at an end a good while agoe.

Am. What doe I reckon of my honour gotten abroade, when my honour at home is stained, my bedd defiled?

Al. Alas, my Lo, whie shold you use these wordes to me?

Am. Awaie from me! I, your Lord? Thou shameles woman,
270 doest thou not blush to call me soe?

Al. Sir, lytle haue I deserued these reproaches at your handes. The Godds knowe how wrongfully you accuse me, and I hope they will doe me right.

Am. O, immortall Godds, what may this meane? I pray the, Sosia, art thou sure thou knowest me?

S. I think I had best looke well upon you, to be sure. I, you are my maister Amphitruo sure, as I take yt.

Am. Did I sup in the shipp yesternight, or did I not?

S. Surely you did, or one very lyke you. But a man can
280 hardly tell what to saie of truth as now the world goes. I haue found another Sosia; belyke here is another Amphitruo. Which of you supt there I cannot tell; I am sure one of you did.

Am. My bedd dishonored!

Al. (*Lachrymanter*) Then let the unspotted Diana plague me for my disloyaltie, if euer man but Amphitruo came in my bedd.

†Am. Would yt were true!

Al. Tis true, my Lord; will you not take myne othe?

290 Am. Tut, you are a woman; you will sweare bouldlie enough. Well, I am soe distraught with this that I scarce knowe myself.

S. I warrant you, Sir, you are Amphitruo yet, or one of them at least; and you loose not your-self, good enough.

Am. Neuer weep, woman; thats no amendes for such a fault as this. What doe you saie if I goe backe to the ship, and bringe hither your Cousin Naucrates, that was [t]here with me, to disproue all you haue said to your face? Doe I wronge you then if I put you from me?

300 Al. If I be found false I am Contented.

† Fol. 19 a.

Am. Then we are agreed. Sirra, staie you here still; I will my-self goe backe and fetch Naucrates. Ile trust no-bodie.

[*Exit.*]

S. Madame, an you be a good ladie, now tell me one thinge, an there be not another Sosia now within besides me.

Al. Sir, you will never leaue your Jybinge.

S. Nay, an you be angrie, I am gone, and soe I hope is my fellowe Sosia to, or els I would not goe in to-daie. [*Exit.*]

Al. (Post Pausam) This is strange to me, that haue liued thus longe untainted in the opinion of the worlde, now to be challenged by my Lord and husband. The goddes, ³¹⁰ I trust, that are wytnesses of myne Innocency, will deliuer me out of this distresse. It cannot be other-wise. I knowe my cousin Naucrates is honorable and loues me. He must needs be wytnes of my side.

ACTUS TERTIUS

SCEN I

JUPITER SOLUS

I am that Amphitruo who ame Jupiter when I liste, and my man is eyther Sosia or Mercury, as I will. I am now stollen from Juno, and come downe hither againe, 'seinge the conflicte betwixt poore Alcumena and her husband, to helpe the weaker—indeed to ease the Innocent of the burthen of my faulte. This seconde comeinge of myne in Amphitruo his lykenes will breed yet a litle more confusion, which I doe to please my-self. But I will make all good in the ende when the truth shalbe knowne. And Alcumena for her Recompense shall without paine be deliuered of twoe braue boyes, the one begotten by her husband, the other by me. But here she comes,—iust in the humor of a woman in these cases, for her husband lefte her in greif, but her greif by this time is turned into Choler. But I, that haue pacified Juno, the angrie Queene of heauen, soe often, doubt not but I shall pacyfie her againe well enough.

SCEN II

ALCUMENA

JUPITER

- A. I cannot haue patience to staie longer in my house, when I thinke how Iniuriouslie I haue bene handled by my husband. Haue I liued with him thus longe in the reputacion of a true wief to be now accused of shame and dishonor; to be used lyk a lunatyke woman, as if I were besides my self? That that he did, he denyes, and affirmes yt to my face that neuer was done; yet he thinks I will endure all

†Fol. 19 b.

this. But he is deceaued. Indeed such was my loue unto him as no meane wronge could haue preueyled against yt. But myne honor is more pretious to me then my lief. It ¹⁰ would trie a kinde wief to haue her bloud attempted by her husband. I had rather he had done soe then as he has done; therefore he hadd not need to threaten to put me awaie, for I meane not to staye with him, unles he make the better satisfacion.

I. [*Aside.*] That that she meanes to put Amphitruo to, that, I see, must I faine to doe, if I meane to get any fauor at her handes at this tyme. And since my love hath bene the cause of her wronge, I must doe my-self iustice, and be contente to beare the brunte of her revenge. ²⁰

Al. Se where he comes, the most Iniuryous lord aliue to his true wief.

J. How now, ladie? What turne you awaie from me?

A. It is the nature of us women not willinglie to looke upon our Enymies.

J. What, open warre, ladye? Plaine Enymies?

†A. I would you would let me alone, sir. Methinkes a man of your worth should not abase himself to medle with soe vilde and dishonest a woman as I am.

J. Nay, then I see you can be angrie, ladie; I would not ³⁰ haue thought yt possible.

A. Twere much I should be well pleased to be toucht in that is dearer to me then my lief.

J. Whie, beleieue me, woman, I spake not as I thought; I did but this to trie the.

A. If I had ever giuen you cause to mistrust me, yet a gentler trial than this might have serued.

J. But I knowe the soe kinde as noe small matter would haue moued thy patience: now I see thou takest it so euill, trust me, ladie, I am sorry I began. Wilt thou forgiue me? ⁴⁰

A. I knowe you set much by my forgiuenes. I expected you should bringe my cosen Naucrates with you, but he is no such man as so easilie to be brought to wronge an Innocent.

J. Whie, I praie the, good Alcumena, beleieue me, I was but in iest all this while. Sosia can beare me wytnes.

A. I know not how you were, Sir. I am sure yt proued earnest to me, for yt has gone as neare me as my harte.

- J. Sweet Alcumena, if euer thou didst loue me, forgiue me but this once.
- 50 A. Sir, if it please you to giue me that which is myne, hereafter, if I be false, you shalbe sure I shall not be false to you. Or if not, if you will but allowe me one to attend me home to my fathers house—or if you will not, yet I hope to goe accompanied with my honor in spight of them that would take yt from me.
- J. Nay, Alcumena, staie a litle; let us haue a worde yet ere we part, if there be no other remedie. And tell me this, I' faith, in equity, if the first fault euer I committed against the in my lief can deserue soe hard iustice as straight to be
- 60 forsaken?
- A. I knowe I cannot please you better; tis that you haue sought. Now you shall haue your desire.
- J. Nay, then, let Jupiter hate me for euer, if yt be not soe farre from my desire that it would greiue me to the harte.
- † A. Let Jupiter be your freind, I beseech him, whatsoeuer become of me.
- J. Well, Ladye, this is once; you saie you will be gone; theres no stayinge of you. Then will I to sea out of hand. Farewell, Thebes. I hope to see heauen ere I see
- 70 the againe, after I am gone once.
- A. The goddes forbid that for my sake you should wronge your Countrie soe much.
- J. Noe, noe, I see tis your desire it should be soe. I could but once iest in my lief, and to be taken then at the hardest! Well, lady, since I see your hart is soe hardened against me that you purpose to leaue me, I will begin first. And for a proof I mistrusted you not, I leaue you what I haue. Ile to my shipp and see her furnisht, and then I am gone.
- A. [*Aside.*] Alas, I see he will be gone indeed if I staie
- 80 him not.—My Lord, good my Lord, beare with a womans weaknes. I knowe you were but in iest with me; I make no doubt of yt.
- J. Nay, I am indifferent now, thinke what you will.
- A. Indeed, my Lord, I will neuer be angrie with yow againe.
- J. Doest thou forgiue me then?
- A. Doe you make a question of yt?
- J. How shall I knowe thou doest?

- A. Harke, and I will tell yow. [*Whispers to him.*]
 J. May I beleiue the?
 A. I hope you will, Sir. 90
 J. Not unles you tell me againe. [*Alcumena whispers againe.*] Now I beleiue the, and am gladd, Ladye, we are become soe good freindes againe. I sweare yt shalbe the last tyme of our fallinge out.—What, Sosia!—I will send him to Blepharo my shipmaister to bidd hym come to dynner to me. [*Aside.*] But I meane to haue some sport with him and Amphitruo to, yet ere I dyne.
 A. [*Aside.*] I maruell whats that he talkes alone to him-self.
 J. What, Sosia, I saie!

†SCEN III

SOSIA

JUPITER

ALCUMENA

- S. Here, Sir, here; you tooke me even in my caste, Sir. A little more I hadd slaked my thirst pretillie well.¹
 J. Sirra, doe you heare?
 (Videt nempe prendentes invicem manus)
 S. I, sir, I. O lord, are you twoe freindes againe? Truely I am gladd to see yt. I thinke you were but in iest all that while, for if you hadd bene in earnest you could not, I thinke, haue bene freindes by this tyme.
 J. Did not I saie that Sosia could beare me wytnes I did but iest with the?
 A. Sir, I beleiue it; what needes more of yt? But, Sirra, 10 how chance you were soe sawcye? Could not your maister iest but you must iest to?
 S. O Lord, madame, the onelie iestinge in the world is to iest with good companie; my maister should haue had sporte alone els.
 A. And was not your maister, thinke you, oddes enough for me, but you must be twoe to one?
 S. Why, Madame, and all lytle enoughe, for one woman is hable to take downe a great many men. I hope you will pardon me, Madame, for my bouldnes. 20

† Fol. 21 a.

¹ Altered in MS. from: "I think I haue slaked my thirst pretillie well since I went in."

- A. Well, Sosia, well, now my lord and I are freindes take heed I helpe you not to a beatinge one of these daies, an you leaue not your knauery.
- J. Sirra, soe yt is. I haue a matter of Religion to performe, a certeine vowe I made to Jupiter before my vyctorie.
- S. Soe, sir.
- J. I would haue you goe fetch hither from the shipp Blepharo, my ship-maister, that, after the solempnitie done, he and I may dyne together.
- ³⁰ S. Ile be there and here againe with a tryce, sir.
- J. See you bee. [*Exit Sosia.*]
- A. In the meanetime, if you please, I will goe in and commaund the vessells you are to use to be in a readynes. —Ragazzo, where are you?
- J. I praie the, goe, and thou shalt make me beholding to the. [*Exit Alcumena.*] Thus haue I deceaued both the mistres & the man together. But a good end shall make amendes for all. Now, as I am sacrificysinge, will Amphitruo returne home from seekinge of Naucrates, whome he cannot finde. But I will haue Mercury keepe him out
⁴⁰ from comeinge 'in here, by his leaue, yet, whome he will take for his man Sosia, and to make up the matter there will be Dromio, his other man, to helpe to keepe out his owne maister to. And Dromio is comeinge here: as sone as he sees me he will make noe question but I am his maister, and soe I am like to be troubled with him. For he comes full in a conceyt to haue at my handes a charge of certeine prisonners comytted to him, as my Mercury made him beleieue, when he gott his ringe from him. And
⁵⁰ prisoners here are none this¹ once; therefore I must salue up the matter as well as I can for the present, that we may not want his companie anone in helpinge to keepe his right maister out of dores. And here he is.

SCEN IIII

DROMIO

JUPITER

- D. [*Solus.*] And they should be unruly now, as these younge nobles are wagges, I would indeed speake some-

† Fol. 21 b.

¹ Written "yth" in MS.

thinge bigge to them, as, 'My honorable subiectes, I must not haue you doe soe.' But I doe not depute yt best to smyte them at any hand.¹ Soe if one of them should chance to come to the crowne afterward, and I come in his fingers, he might make me hopp without my crowne and my head to. No, Ile none of that, but an they be my faithfull prisoners Ile be their most duetifull gouernour. I'faith what a credytt it wilbe as I walke in the street¹⁰ now, to here the voice of the comon people: 'There goes Monsier le gouernour,' saith one. 'There goes his wourship,' saith another. For indeed the base name of a Jailor is fytt for such as keepe theiues, not for him that hath true nobilitie in his keepinge. But yonder I haue spied my master, Amphitruo, whome I haue bene seekinge of soe longe. A man would thinke, that seeth him, he is not soe litle but that he might haue bene found by this time. Truely I cannot tell with what face to looke upon him, I am soe bashfull, now I am towards this same²⁰ preferment. And indeed shamelesnes in an officer is a notorious thinge. Well, I will sett before the best face I haue.—Lord, Sir, I haue bene to seeke you, I think all the world ouer. [*Aside.*] I 'doe not thinke when I am in place once it wilbe fytt for me to stande with my hatt of, any longer.

- J. And where hast thou bene seekinge of me?
 D. Marry, there and here, and here and there, & there and here againe; in twoe wordes, where not, sir?
 J. I can tell the in fwe: not there where I was, for then³⁰ thou hadest found me.
 D. 'They be iust fwe indeed. (numerat in digitos dum ille loquitur). I praie you what was yt you said, Sir?
 J. Must I tell you twise? I saie you sought me not where I was, for then you had found me.
 D. Thats true indeed, Sir. Soe a man may saie, an he had knowne that, he had neare sought for you. But I was vildlie affraid if I had not at last founde you by lande I should haue bene put to haue sought you by water.
 J. And whie wert thou affraide of that?

40

¹ Altered from: "with my hand."

† Fol. 22 a.

² "Let me see: | not | there | where | I | was | for | then | thou | hadest | found | me. |" Crossed out in MS. at beginning of Dromio's speech.

- D. You would not aske me the question and you knew as much as I knowe. Whie, I tell you, Sir, he that hath bene condempned, brought to the place of persecution, had the hangman by the hande, the halter about his neck, made his profession, songe 'god blesse us,' the eleuen and fyftie psalme, said 'Good people praie for me,' nay, had one legge alreadie of of the ladder, and was then sauēd, neuer scapēt hanginge nearer then I scapēt drowninge.
(*Omnia haec singillatim agi oportet*)
- J. I am gladd ont, Dromio.
- 50 D. What, that I was almost drowned, Sir?
- J. Noe, I mean that thou escapest, man.
- D. Thats a-nother matter, indeed.
- J. And by what tyme came you to your mistres, then?
- D. Tyme enough for any-thinge I saide to her.
- J. Whie, spake you not wyth her?
- D. No, nor she with me neyther.
- J. Wheres my ringe then?
- D. As though you knewe not! Ist you are in iest, Sir?
- J. What doe you meane by that?
- 60 †D. I meane you are not in earnest, sir.
- J. I hope, sir, you haue not cozoned me of my ringe?
- D. 'Cozen you,' quoth he: marry, would I hadd the grace to Cozen you.
- J. Thanke you, sir. This it is to commytt any-thinge to a fooles charge.
- D. [*Aside.*] I knowe he meanes that by the prisoners.—Nay, maister, never saie soe. Doe but try me once; and you finde me wantinge eyther in vice or negligence, neare trust me with charge againe.
- 70 J. Try the once? And nere trust the with charge againe? What charge doest thou meane, man?
- D. You need not make it soe strange, an yt please you. If I looke not to them as I should doe, then put me out of office, and put Sosia in my rome.
- J. I praie the, what doest thou meane by this? I perceauē the not.
- D. Will you haue me speake louder, sir?
- J. Speake lowder, you aske? Speak me plainer. Whome wouldst thou looke to? Whie doest thou not answer me?

† Fol. 22 b.

- D. (Lachrymanter) Nay, tis no matter, Sir; though you doe⁸⁰ not, I am not greatlie disoffended.
- J. But wilt thou tell me what thou meanest?
- D. Whie, those same prisoners you sent me worde by Sosia I should keepe. By that token you badd him take the ringe from me, you gaue me to deliuer my ladye.
- J. Thou wilt neuer be but a foole.
- D. Naye, lyke enough soe, sir.
- J. Whie, I haue neyther prisoners, nor ever badd Sosia take any ringe of the.
- D. Then, belyke, I am cozoned for any-thinge I see; and yet⁹⁰ let me see; how should he come to knowe I had the ringe, if you tould him not?
- J. How? Whie thou art such an asse as if I hadd bene as he I would haue seene it in thy face.
- D. A ringe in my face? A ringe in a hogges face! And my face be well lokt into t'has as fewe ringes as other folkes faces.
- J. Whie, neare make soe much of that, man. Ile tell the by thie face, Ile laie my lief, anie-thinge thou' hast done, and soe a man may doe by any fooles face in the world.[†] ¹⁰⁰
- D. Tell me anythinge I haue done by my face? Then will I neare owne yt againe, an it were fие times better then tis.
- J. Whie, come hither. Looke upon me a litle, that thou maist beleieue me another time. Let me see: when our Armyes were hard a-fightinge I knowe what thou didest by thy face.
- D. Nay, nere stand lookinge soe, for and my face saye otherwise then well by me I defye my face, I.
- J. When we were hard in fightinge then thou,—lett me see. ¹¹⁰
- D. [*Aside.*] O face, face, and thou beest a good face, be true to thy maister now, face.
- J. Then thou for a hundreth pound wert runninge away.
- D. I am the wourse for my face while I liue. Thou Judas misbegotten face, that art a traitor to thy owne maister! Thou monster of faces! I will hier some wild catt, some hagg of hell, or some fernall furye to capperclawe the, or els I will remoue the hither, and with the wurst peice here make a truer, a more disloyall, and honest face then euer

[†] Written "ya" in MS.

† Fol. 23 a.

- 120 thou werte. Yet had thou but betraied me to my maister, and not lyke a swynes face shewed the ringe to Sosia, yt would neuer have greiued me soe much. Well, I will about the translatinge of the, presentlie for yt.
- J. What, quite out of loue with thie face by this time? Tis pittie, tis soe good a one. But I will haue you freindes againe for all that.
- D. Naie, then.
- J. Sweare not, man.
- D. Nay, an I bee?
- 130 J. Whie, I haue but iested with the, all this while.
- D. I, much iesting! And yet it maie be so to, for I knowe my face could neare tell you that I ranne awaie.
- J. It needed not, man, for I see yt my-self, as I loket about me to breath me, when we were in fight.
- D. An I prairie you, Sir, an I maie be soe bould, is your eyesight soe transparent that you might not be ouerseene in such a duste as was then?
- J. It may be soe indeed, Dromio.
- D. Tis a plaine case; you were greatlie mistaken.
- 140 J. Indeed, Amphitruo dares not sweare he see the——
- D. I may tell you Amphitruo does the wiser.
- †J. And for the ringe, yt was not without my consent that Sosia tooke yt of the. But the prisoners are yet to come. When they come, challenge me of my worde, and if I faile the, then blame me.
- D. I'faith, I knewe you were in iest all this while. A litle more I had giuen my face the remoue, I warrant it. But doe you heare, maister, when will these prisoners come, think you?
- 150 J. Neare thinke yt longe. As sone as they are come theile be heare.
- D. Thats well. And when a man has them now, what were yt best for a man to be called, think you?
- J. Whie, what thou wilte.
- D. As it were, Monsier Le Gouverneur, or soe, sir, for I would not be called a Jailor, for all the world: that were Cozen german to a hangman once remoued (interposita pausa) from the gallowes.
- J. Thou shalt—thou shalt be called monsieur le gouverneur,

and he that calls the not soe, I will turne him out of my¹⁰⁰ house.

D. What, Sosia and all, maister?

J. I, Sosia, or ten Sosiaes.

D. Then will I see if Sosia or ten Sosiaes dare saie to me, 'Dromio, blacke is thine eye.'

SCEN V

MERCURIUS SOLUS

Now ys it my fathers will that I shall keepe Amphitruo from comeinge in here, whoe will presentlie returne from seekinge of Naucrates, and to this end will I put a garlande on my head, and make my-self lyke one of Bacchus knightes, as if I were drunke, the better to couer the matter. Then will I and Dromio up to the house toppe togeather. I doubt not but we shall keepe him out well enough as longe as the tiles¹ last. As for Dromio, yt will be the least parte of his thought that he keepes out his maister, for he verilie takes my Father for him, whome he¹⁰ shall leaue within. And all that I doe shall after light upon Sosia his necke. What care I for that? Tis my fathers will it should be soe, and the truth wilbe discouraged eare longe. Well, I will about it straight. See, Amphitruo is heare at hand, litle loking for such Inter-teignement at his owne house.

¹Written "toles" in MS.

†ACTUS QUARTUS

SCEN I

AMPHITRUO

MERCURY

DROMIO

A. [*Solus.*] I cannot finde Naucrates by no meanes. He was not in the shipp nor in his owne house, nor could any man tell me what was become of him. Now will I home therefore, and never leaue untill I bringe my wief her-self to confesse who hath coukolded me, for if I let yt passe thus, let me suffer death. But softe! The dores, methinkes, are shutt. How now? This is even much after the reste.—Who is within here? Who comes to open me the dore?

10 M. (Mercurius interloquendum modo oscitet, modo ructet.) Whoe is at the dore?

D. Whoe is that soe lustie at our dore?

A. Tys I.

D. Whoe? My maister? This is braue! Haue I one maister wythin and another wythout? I am sure I lefte one within doeinge of his Collacion to the Goddes: by the masse, Ile goe see whither he be within still or noe.

A. [*Aside.*] Thats Dromio; he is gone downe to let me in. But what did he there, trowe wee? And is not Sosia yonder
20 still, with a garland about his heade? I maruell what time of daie tis with him.—Sirra, whatt make you there? Whie goe not you downe to open the dore?

M. Whiw, whiw, whiw!

A. Whie doe not you answere me, Sirr?

M. Whome, Sir?

A. Mee.

M. Whie, whatt are you?

A. 'What am I,' sir? Do you aske the question?

M. I, marry, doe I, sir. A plague on you! What doe you
30 rappinge soe hard at our dore?

†Fol. 24 a.

- A. How ys that?
- M. 'Tis even soe, as if your head were broken for'te you hadd but your due.
- A. Sosia!
- M. Indeed, thats my name: how, then?
- A. Vylleine, doest thou aske me, 'how then?'
- M. I, marry, doe I, sir. Never stand faceinge of me. What wouldest thou, fellowe? What art thou?
- A. Thou base cowardlie villeine, doest thou aske what I am, whome, for this daies worke, will I haue whipte till thou ⁴⁰ hast not a iote of 'skynne lefte upon any parte of thy bodie. I see thou arte drunke now, but thou shalt paie for yt when thou arte sober.
- M. Freinde, you should haue bene very prodigall in your youth.
- A. And whie, Sir?
- M. That now you are ould come a-begginge to me for a mischeif.
- A. Dearly shalt thou abide, villeine, this wronge, if eare I get the into my handes. 50
- M. Doe you heare, sir? Doe I not coole you to much to keepe you without dores all this while?
- A. I doubt not but eare longe I shall heat you for it.
- D. Sirra, fellowe Sosia, my lord is within.
- M. Thou needes not haue tould me that; I knewe soe much before. But what hast thou brought there?
- D. 'What haue I brought,' quoth he, as though a man could trauell wythout his Liquor into these high Countries.
- M. I'faith, god haue marcy, thou art ould suersby.
- D. I, let me alone for a fore-caste. But, Sirra, what a ⁶⁰ slave is yon! Doest thou not see he hath stollne my maisters face up and downe, and his apparell, and how lyke a villeine he lookes?
- M. Whie, thou saiest he lookes lyke thy maister.
- D. Thats true, but soe he does not looke lyke a villeine, but as he is theif, man, soe he lookes lyke a villeine. You haue wytt, fellowe Sosia, an twere a maister of an hospitall.
- M. How is that, I prairie the?
- D. You will take a man up for haltinge straight.
- M. Well stumbled, I'faith, upon a good iest. 70

- D. Sirra, how the slaue leanes this waie! An you mark him, he hath the very forfeiture of a theif.
- M. Well, wilt thou helpe me to keepe him out?
- D. To keepe him out? And more then that to. Doe but thou goe downe and take him and binde him, and if I helpe the not to beate him to, neuer trust me againe.
- A. [*Aside.*] Yonder is Dromio againe; tis he. Ile laye my lief now it is some plotte of my wiefes, and he is one of the confederacy to. I will trye him.—Sirra! Dromio!
- 80 †D. In good time, sir; what then?
- A. [*Aside.*] Did I not tell you soe? Hark how sawcilie the varlet answeres me.—Sirra, did not you heare me knock?
- D. Yes, marry, did I, and hope to see you knockt to, by and by, an you get you not awaie the soner.
- A. Whie, villeine, I saie, whie doest thou not open the dore?
- D. Open the dore, sir? Alas, thats but hard by, bycause you seeme, as yt were, to be one of my acquaintance, good fellowe. I giue the leaue to open it thie-self if thou canst, and take yt for a fauour.—Haue I not flouted him, think-
90 est thou?
- M. Yes, faith, hast thou: you are such another—you need much to talke of other mens good wyttes.
- D. Awaie, awaie, fellowe Sosia. I'faith you will mak me blush, by and by.
- A. Was euer man thus wretched but I, to liue to be flouted by those he hath brought up?
- D. Goe your waies; thats a lye. I will be sworne I was brought upp by the ladder here; I had neare bene here
100 to-daie els.—Sirra, fellowe Sosia, Ile tell the what comes into my head now.
- M. I prae the, doe. I knowe tis some speciall matter.
- D. Were not this an Incony place to take a pipe of Tobacco in? O, an our house had a chymney, a man might take yt out of the chymney most plentifully!
- M. But, sirra, for want of Tobacco, what if we take a litle Liquor in the meane-time?
- D. A good motion, a very good motion, I'faith. But what wilt thou giue me if I floute yonder slaue now in high
110 dutch?

- M. What will I giue the? Thou shalt haue a kysse of Thessala; how saiest thou?
- D. Shall I i' faith? O, braue! But where shall I kisse her, sirra?
- M. What a question is that! Where thou wilt; chuse thy place.
- [D.] Remember what you saie: I shall chuse my place. Then haue at him.—Heare you, *mein herr, ich bringe euch unndt heng euch selues*.—I thinke I haue dutcht him.
- M. Very good fustian, I'faith. 120
- D. Here, fellowe Sosia.
- M. Me danck you, good fellowe Dromio; call you 'this highe dutch, to drynke all the beare and then giue a man the emptye pott? Well, Ile finde an use for yt by and by. (proijcit enim mox in Amphitruonem.)
- A. [*Aside.*] Can a man indure all this? But I will let this foole alone and trye Sosia yet a litle further.—Sirra Sosia, you will open the dore.
- M. Can you tell when, Sir?
- D. Ha, ha, he! a very good iest, by the Lord, a very good ieste, and without infectacion. 130
- A. Doest thou thinke whippinge shall serue thy turne? Nay, if I kill the not——
- D. Kill him', quoth he! Thou wilt be hanged as sone as thou canst reach him.
- M. Sirra, you that threaten to kill men, starvelinge Carcase, shadowe of a man, be gone quickly, I giue you warninge, and touch not our dore againe, you had best, not see much as with your litle finger. An you doe I will hitt you such a phillipp on the coxcombe with one of these tyles that I will make the spytt thy tounge out. 140
- D. [*Aside.*] He hath spoken most pithilie; what shall I saie after this? Even as my muse will giue me leaue.—And if thou doest not spitt yt out the soner, marke me well, I will take the such a blowe on thy chappes if Apelles guide——
- M. Apollo, man, thou wouldest saie, I knowe.
- D. I, soe I saie, if Pollio guide my right——
- M. Elbowe.
- D. I, if Pollio guide my right Elbowe, that I will, that I

150 will—I'faith you haue put me out, that you haue, fellowe Sosia.

M. I warrant the; goe on, man.

D. —that I will send thie tounge for a lyinge after meat, lyke a calues tounge downe thy throte, and see into thy foundation and soe forth. (*Hic saepius in morem hoeritantis despuat*)

M. Passing well. [*Aside.*] This is within all comparison.

A. [*Aside.*] What doe I muse about? "*Harke he will make another speech.*" (" " betwixt these markes is sayed by Dromio.) A slaue, drunkerd, wilt thou forbidde me to
160 knocke at my owne dores? Doe I not knowe the to be a coward? Ile goe pluck them downe to the very ground.

D. Surely the man has spoken as his wytt serues him.[†]

M. You will not, I am sure.

A. See whither I will or no.

(*In hoc intermedio tempore lateres eruunt, quorum aliqui sint veri[‡] qui terram feriant aliqui falsi, qui illum*)

M. Then haue at you, I' faith.

D. Come on, I'faith; lets to him.

M. But, Sirra, how an he gett up to us?

D. I warrant the; at him, at him!

A. O, he hath wounded me! What, villaine, thy maister?

170 M. Doest thou finde falt with drunkerds, and call me Master? He your man? I'faith, as much as I am, and all one.

A. Whie, am not I thy maister?

D. Sirra, I longe to be at it againe; me²-thinkes tis fine sporte.

M. Staie a litle, man; faire warrs are best. We must haue some parlie.

D. I am perswaded with much adoe.

M. You my maister, Sir? I hope I haue no maister but
180 Amphitruo.

A. Haue I then lost my shape? Tell me for godes sake; doe I not looke lyke Amphitruo?

D. Yes, by my troth, doeth he, and I should speake my conscience: onely I thinke Amphitruo his head is wholer then his.

M. Harke, Dromio, you are called within.

D. I come, I come! Ys it you, Mistris Thessala? Take

[†] Fol. 26 a.

[‡] Written "veri" in MS.

² Written "my" in MS.

heed, you had best, I doe not fall upon you.—Fellowe Sosia, you will looke to him. [*Exit Dromio.*]

M. I warrant the; lett me alone. [*To Amphitruo.*] Did not 190
I saie thou wert tipled thy-self, that askes another man
whoe thou arte? Well, begone, I would wish the, without
more adoe, and trouble not our house while Amphitruo,
beinge now returned from the campe, is solasinge himself
with his Lady.

A. What Ladye?

M. With Alcumena.

A. Whoe?

M. Did I not tell the? Amphitruo, my lord and maister.
Trouble me no more. 200

A. Tell me but this: with whome doeth he lye?

M. Yet aigaine? With whome—You longe for a tile or
twoe more?

A. Good Sosia, tell me.

†M. Did I not tell you? Most louinglie with Alcumena.

A. In the same Chamber?

M. I, and the same bedd, to.

A. Then I am undone.

M. [*Aside.*] I think yt gaine that he calls undoeinge, to
haue a mans ground sowed to his handes. 210

A. Sosia!

M. What a murreyne wilt thou haue with Sosia?

A. Raskall, doest thou knowe me?

M. I, slaue, that I doe, for a troublesome fellowe; wilt
thou begone?

A. I tell the I am thy maister Amphitruo.

M. I tell the my Master Amphitruo is now in bedd with
my mistres, and if thou beest not gone the soner, I will
fetch him hither to trye him-self.

A. For Goddes loue let me but see him. 220

M. Thou shalt, within a while, bycause thou art soe desyrous.
But in the meane-time se you medle not with our dores, least
now he hath done his other sacryfice, he come out and
sacrifice you.

SCEN II

AMPHITRUO

BLEPHARO

SOSIA

- A. [*Solus.*] O Immortall goddes, what desastrous chance hath enwrap^t my house since I went last from home? Tis even here, I feare me, as it was in Arcadie, where men were changed into beastes and neuer returned to their former shape againe. Well, here will I pause a while untill I may see this newe Amphitruo.
- B. You tell me wonders, Sosia, that you should finde at home another iust such a one as your-self.
- S. But here ye me: when I am found another Sosia, and
 10 Amphitruo another Amphitruo, what will you saie and you finde another Blepharo? [*Aside.*] Would he might; I'faith, and finde as good a Cudgellinge as I did to, and then be turned home againe without his dynner.
- B. You tell me strange thinges. But let us goe faster, least Amphitruo staie for us.
- †A. I thinke yt is the destynye of great men to haue semblable crosses to their good successe. Soe stories recoumpt of others, and soe yt is fallne out with me.
- S. Sir, Blepharo!
- 20 B. Whats the matter?
- S. I am affraide all goes not well; looke you, yonder standes my Maister without, and the dore fast shut.
- B. Thates nothinge; perhapps he takes the ayre to gett him a stomacke.
- S. It maie be soe. And soe he shuttes the dore that his hunger when yt comes goe not in and eat upp the meate before him. Marke him, for godes sake, how he standes mumblinge of somethinge to him-self, as though he were castinge up of his Accoumptes. And he should call upon
 30 me nowe I should make him a faire reckoninge. Doe not goe soe faste, I praie the; let us listen to him what he saies.
- A. I am affraied the goddes are angrie with me, and meane to take from me againe the glory they haue giuen me by this victorie. All my family is in a confusion, and that

¹ "Befallne" is crossed out in MS.

† Fol. 27 a.

which is my greatest greif, my wief hath dishonored my bedd. But of all wonders yet I maruell moste to finde my cup in her custodie, the seale remayninge still unbroken. Besides, could she not tell me directlie of the particulers of the battell? Out of doubt this could not be but Sosia⁴⁰ his doeing, that villeine, who besides hath wronged me soe much.

S. He speakes of me.

B. I, that that I am sorie to heare.

S. Whither had I best goe to him, or noe?

B. As good sone as signe, man, and the better now before he growes further into choller.

S. Thinke you soe?

A. Yet it wilbe some ease to me if I maye but revenge myself of that villeine.

50

S. Doe you heare him? For the loue of god let me be gonne.

B. Whither wouldest thou goe, man? Thou wilt not runne awaie, I am sure.

S. I am indifferent whither I doe or not.

B. I warrant the, man; pluck upp a good harte. You a souldier!

S. All this while I see plainly he is contryvinge some mischeif against me. But what reason has he?[†]

†A. Doe I not see Blepharo? I muste [ask]¹ what busines^{eo} has brought him hither. But tis well he is come; he may doe that for me that Naucrates should haue done, and helpe to convince my wief of her forgeries to her face.—What good newes with you, Blepharo?

B. Haue you forgott yourself so sone, Sir? Did not you send Sosia to me this morninge to the shipp to bidd me come to you to dynner?

A. Not I, in good faith. But where is that villeyne?

B. Whome doe you meane?

A. Sosia.

70

B. He was here even now. (*hic nutu agit Sosia*)

A. What, he was not! Whither is the villeine gone? If I kill him not, let him upbraid me hereafter with the base wronges he hath done me.—Haue I gott you at last, Sir?

B. I beseech you, Sir, haue patience.

[†] Fol. 27 b.

¹ Word omitted in MS.

- A. Let me alone, Blepharo, for he shall never scape my handes.
- B. Heare me, sir, but a word first.
- A. Speake quickly, for I will endure no longe delaye.
- 90 S. Why, sir, I could come no sooner, I am sure, unles you would haue had me flye, and that a man cannot doe lightlie without winges.
- A. By heauens, Ile forbear him no longer.
- B. I praie you, Sir, hould your handes; we could possibly come no faster.
- A. What tell you of faster or softlier? Doe you see the house, the tyles, my head broken?
- S. 'The house, the tyles, my head broken,' quoth he? Why, had I your head in kepinge that I should answere for the
100 breakinge of yt?
- A. Hark to this villeine. Blepharo, you doe me wronge to staie my hande. Thinke you that these thinges are to be put upp at a slaues hand?
- B. Whie, Sosia, what saie you to this?
- S. I praie you, Sir, when should this be done?
- A. Doest thou aske me, villeine? Doest thou not knowe? Twas even now within this houre.
- S. Lawe ye, now, I thought soe much. And did not you send me out in the morninge to fetch Blepharo to †dynner to you, and haue not I bene with him eare since?
- 100 A. Lyinge villeine, whoe sent the?
- S. Marry, even you, sir.
- A. Does thy drinke worke in the still?
- S. I, mutch drinke! for as sone as I was come you set me presentlie to looke to the cleansinge of the vesselles against your sacrifice, and as sone as that was done, you sent me abroad to fetch him here.
- B. Sir, let me perswade you a litle. By this I now here of you, comparinge it with that he hath tould me, I feare
110 some vilde magitian hath enchaunted your whole famylie. It were best, in my poore aduise, to enquire further into the matter, before you prosecute any revenge upon him whome perhapps you might after finde Innocent, and then yt would greiue you to late. I doe not think he durst haue attempted this against you.

† Fol. 28 a.

- A. [*Aside.*] He saies true, and I care not if I followe his counsell.—Well, Blepharo, thou hast half perswaded me. But thou shalt goe in with me, that I may trie whither my wief will face the and me downe to, as she hath done him and me already.

120

SCEN III

JUPITER

AMPHITRUO

SOSIA

BLEPHARO

- J. [*Solus.*] Whats he that hath kept such a sturre at our doore to-daie? I think he hath almost remoued yt of of the hinges. Would I might see him that hath plaid these reakes; I trust I should teach him better manners. I maruell Blepharo is soe longe a-comeinge. I sent Sosia outtyme enough to haue brought him by this time.

- S. Blepharo, he that is now come out of house, he is my maister, thates certeine, and this fellowe here is a Juggler.

- B. O Jupiter, what doe I see? This is not certeine; yonder is Amphitruo.

10

- J. O, are you come, sir? I am gladd ont, for of my word my stomack was upp a good while agoe.

- S. Did not I saie that he is a Juggler?

- A. What should myne be then, that haue not eaten yet since my arryuall? He may haue refresht him-self by this tyme, an it please him, out of my store.

- †S. Sir, and you be hungrie, yonder is a hartichoke for you.

- A. Villeine, hast thou neuer done?

- S. Villeine in your face! Your trickes shall not serue you now my maister is come.

20

- A. My trickes, slave?

- J. How now, sir, what are you that menace my seruante in my presence?

- S. I beleiue Master Juggler, you haue mett with one will conuince you now.

- A. Your seruante, sir?

- J. I, my seruante, soe I saie.

- A. Tis a lye; he is myne.

- J. Sirra, goe you in and get dynner readie; in the meane-time Ile dresse him heare.

30

S. Goe but dresse him as my fellowe Sosia dreste me. But
He goe mak dynner readie; tis the best worke I went yet
aboute since my comeinge home. [*Exit Sosia.*]

J. Now, Sir, is it you that saie I lye?

A. I saie thou liest lyke a damned sorcerer as thou arte, that
hast by thy charmes abused me and my whole famylie.
(*Supplantat¹ & evaginat et gladium simul*)

J. For this reproach will I here presently hange the
upp.

A. O, helpe me, Blepharo, helpe me, or I am undone.

40 B. [*Aside.*] They are soe lyke that I cannot tell which of
them hath the wronge, yet I will doe what I can to take up
the matter betwixt them.—Amphitruo, doe not kill Amphitruo;
spare his lief.

J. Callest thou him Amphitruo?

B. If Amphitruo were as he was wont to be, and as other
men be, a single Amphitruo, I might then possibly wronge
you, but now the fashion of doublinge is come up I knowe
no more reason whie one should be Amphitruo then the
other. [*Jupiter seizes Amphitruo.*]

50 A. O, what doest thou to me?

B. Good Amphitruo, strangle him not.

J. Whie tell me, doeth he seme to be Amphitruo?

B. Both of you seeme no lesse to me.

A. O Almighty Jupiter, where haue I loste my shape? Let
me aske him. Are you Amphitruo?

†J. Doe you denye yt?

A. Be you, a goddes name, as you seeme to be, a better man
then Amphitruo, but I knowe yt there is no other Amphitruo
in Thebes but I.

60 J. And I saie there is none but I. Let Blepharo be Judge.

A. With all my harte; I desire no better.

B. Alas, how can I iudge betwixt you? You are soe lyke—
yet I will doe the best I can. How saie you, will you stand
to my Judgment?

A. I am Content.

J. And I.

B. [*To Amphitruo.*] Then tell me, you, before the battell
began what specyall charge gaue you me?

A. To keepe my shipp still in readines.

¹ Looks like "suppluntat" in MS.

† Fol. 29 a.

- J. That if I were put to the wurst I might recouer her for 70
a refuge.
- A. Besides to haue specyall care to the truncke that carryed
my treasure.
- J. But how much was in yt?
- B. Nay, let me aske that question; can you tell your-self?
- J. Twenty thousand crownes.
- B. As iust as can be.
- A. I cannot denie yt.
- B. [*To Amphitruo.*] And you, how many ducketts?
- A. Ten thousand, and thre thousand double pistolettes. 80
- B. [*Aside.*] Both of them haue answered as right as is
possible. I cannot tell what to saie to yt, if one of them
were not lockt in the truncke.
- J. Hark ye a litle further. You knowe with this hand I
killed kinge Pterelas, tooke awaie his spoiles, got the daie
of our enymies, was presented after the battell with the
cupp the kinge was wont to drinke in, which I brought
home in a Caskett, gaue yt my wief, with whome I washt,
supt, and laye this last night.
- A. Alas, what doe I heare? I am scarce my-self, thats 90
right. He saies I am not Amphitruo. I finde I am not
my-self. Wherein is our difference? Is not this to sleepe
walkinge, to dye beinge alieue? I am, out of doubte,
Amphitruo. Well may Enchantmentes seaze upon my
flesh, or the baser parte of my soule, my affections, but as
for my understandinge, yt is a brighter light then can be
eclipst by all the blacknes of the blackest arte. †I knowe
I am Amphitruo, I, the captaine of the Thebans, who
conquered the Taphians, and lefte there noble Cephalus
my liefetenaunte. 100
- J. And I that Amphitruo that slewe those outlawes, the
dreadful foragers of my country, whoe with their pyracie
awed all Archaia, Ætolia, Phocis, the Ionian, Ægean, and
Cretick seas.
- A. O, Immortall godes, I no longer beleieue my-self; farewell
understandinge and all, if he thus presentlie recount my
storie. Nowe I am not Amphitruo the captaine, nor
Amphitruo the conqueror enricht with soe many spoiles,
honored with soe many victories. But I am Amphitruo the

†Fol. 29 b.

- 110 miserable. Sir, you shall not take this from me. I am poore, unfortunate, abiect Amphitruo; you haue noe Interest in all this. I am Amphitruo the dishonored, the disgraced: will you fight with me for these tytles? I am Amphitruo, that am wronged by my wief and my seruantes: saie, are you he? I am Amphitruo that am robde of my wief and my seruantes. I, you can beare me wytnes I am hee. O, Blepharo, looke to yt.
- B. I will doe my best, and there is but one thinge lefte to helpe me: if that be in you both, you must even be faine to be twoe still for me; tis more then I can doe to make you one.
- J. I knowe what you meane, the scarre in my right shoulder that remaines of the wound kinge Pterelas gaue me.
- B. The same.
- A. For godes sake, looke us both well.
- J. Doest thou see yt or noe?
(Quid si similia appareant subucula cum defibulantur.)
- B. Unbrase your-self; lett me looke on you to. O heauens, what doe I see? They haue yt both in the same place, of
120 the same length, the scarre yet fresh in them, and the skynne betwixte redd and blue, for all the world alyke. I haue done; let them that haue more wytt then I giue Judgment in this matter. I can saye nothings to see nice a difference: even take yt up betwixt you for me. I must be gone. I haue busines. I neare sawe the like to this before.
- A. Whie Blepharo, wilt thou then forsake me at this pinche?
- B. I cannot tell which of you I forsake bycause Ile displease neyther. Ile forsake you both.
- 140 †J. And I will to Alcumena, whoe is now upon the point of beinge deliuered.
- A. What will become of me now? Haue all forsaken me, my wief, my seruantes, my freindes? Whither shall I goe? Into the house, to be controuled where I am commander? Into the Cyttye to be subiecte to their tounge, whose heades not longe since were under my girdle? To the kinge, to be highly skorned and royallie laught at? Was yt the will of the Immortall goddes I should survyue soe

† Fol. 30 a.

many daungers in my youth to reape disgrace for my ages porcion? Were my flaxen haire soe often adorned with laurell, and shall my siluer lockes be incircled with nettles? Tut, yt was not I. Did I conquer the Taphians, bringe under the Outlawes, kill kinge Pterelas with my owne handes, and now suffer my-self to be Cockoulded by my wiefe, flouted by my seruauntes, braued by a stranger at myne owne dores? Well, and if I put up all this quietlie yt was not I. I am not Amphitruo. But if I goe in & hewe them all in pecies with my sworde for revenge, then twas I. I then am Amphitruo. But hark! what crye is that within?

160

(post clamorem parientis tonitru ingens quod aliquam diu continuetur oportet.) Alcmena shrikes out within, and presently together with her the Drums-for thunder.)¹

¹The passage "Alcmena . . . thunder" is written in a different hand.

ACTUS QUINTUS

SCEN I

BROMIA

AMPHITRUO

DROMIO

(Durante tonitru aperiente se ostio cum impetu, Dromio excurrrens ex aedibus in herum iacentem titubet, & iuxta concidat, totus stupefactus.)

- B. [Solus.] Alas, alas, what a daie is this! My feare is such as I cannot tell where I am. Would not one haue thought that heauen and earth would haue come together? My head akes yet with the noise. I thinke I shall not be well this moneth againe. Lord, what strange thinges are fallne out in our house! As my ladye was in traueyll she called upon the goddes to assyste her. Then was there presentlie such a thunderinge and lighteninge as we in the house fell flatt to the grounde for feare. Then I knowe
10 not whoe, but some-bodie with a huge voyce cried out, "Alcumena, feare not; the goddes haue hard thy praiers and their cheif comaunder wilbe propitious to the; and you that are fallne, rise up and be not affraied." With that I rose up, but durst scarce open myne eyes for feare. But as sone as I had opened them I was wurse affraied then I was before, for our house did shyne soe all over as I verylie thought yt had bene on a light fier. Then my ladye called to me to come to her, and when I was come I perceaued she was deliuered of twoe braue boyes, even by
20 the grace of the goddes, without help of 'mydwief or maide.—But who be these that lye here? Alas, some, out of doubt, that haue bene smytten with thunder. Yonder lookes lyke Dromio, and I should knowe this ould gentleman; I feare me yt is my Lord. Out, alas, tis he indeed! Dead, or aliue, trowe we?—Sir, my Lord!
- A. O now my time is come.
- B. Arise, my Lord, arise, if you be aliue.

† Fol. 30 b.

- A. What wilt thou doe with me?
- B. Giue me your hand; I will helpe you upp.
- A. Whoe takes me by the hande?
- B. Your handmaide, Bromia.
- A. I am all in a cold sweate for feare since Jupiter hath threatned me. But howe durst you come abroad?
- B. Alas, we were as scared within as you were abroad. O, the lord, the wonders that we haue seene in our house! They doe yet soe amase me I can scarslie speake.
- A. But tell me, wench, I praie the, doest thou knowe me for certeine to be thy maister Amphitruo?
- B. What should ayle me but to knowe you?
- A. I praie the marke me well; be sure. 40
- B. I am sure; whie do you make yt a question?
- A. This wench alone is well of all my household.
- B. Nay, all are well within, thanks to the goddes.
- A. Would I were soe to, but my wief hath taken order with me for my wellfare.
- B. You wilbe of another minde by that time you haue heard all I can tell you, and finde she is your chaste and loyall wief.
- A. Why, what canst thou saie?
- B. First, she is deliuered of twoe twynnes. 50
- A. Twoe twynnes?
- B. Twoe twynnes.
- A. Then I liue againe.
- B. Let me tell you on, that you may knowe the Imortall goddes meane you and your lady well.
- A. Speake on.
- B. When she was upon the pointe of her deliuey expecting the ordinary panges and daungers that doe accompanie weomen in such case, she lifted 'up her handes to heauen, and bareheaded called devoutly upon the goddes for their 60 assistance; where-upon presentlie came soe mightie a thunder-clapp as we verilie thought the house would haue fallne upon our heades. The thunder contynued as you heard, and in the meane-time our house shined all over within, as if yt had bene colored with the beames of the sonne settinge.
- A. I praie the, wench, if thou comest to abuse me make an

end quicklie, and hould me not longe in this fooles paradise.

70 B. Sir, remoue this suspiciousnes of yours; I speake nothing but truth.

A. Then goe forwarde.

B. In this time was she deliuered. And besides one shryke at the first, rather for feare then for any-thinge els, we neuer perceaued anie token of anguish in her deliuiery.

A. I am gladd to heare this, howsoever she hath deserved of me.

B. Sir, let that alone, and but heare me on. After she was deliuered she badd us washe the babes, as we did, but that
80 childe I washt, lord, what a choppinge boye it is! Whie, sir, tis half a man already. I am sure twas more then thre of us could doe to binde him in his swadelinge cloutes, and yet we had Sosia to help us.

A. These thinges thou tellest me be strange. They be signes indeed that the goddes are on her side.

B. Nay, this is nothinge to that that is behinde. After we had laide them in the cradle there came glydinge in out of the base courte twoe huge highe crested serpentes, and they came aduancinge their heades dyrectlie into the
90 nursery.

A. What then?

B. Feare not, Sir, I warrant you. Beinge come in, they caste their heades everye waie towards every corner. At last they moued towards the cradle. I plaict it still from them as well as I could, beinge affraied both of the babes and my-self. They made the more still after yt, till at laste this childe I tould you that is soe great alreadie, espyinge them, lept out of the cradle, assaulted them, caught one in one hand and the other in the other.

100 A. Thou makes me tremble to heare the. For goddes sake what became of them? Did they not hurt him?

†B. Hurt him? Alas, he crusht them both as if they had bene twoe flyes untill he lefte them for deade. Presently after that one spake to my Ladye with a mightie voice, whoe, as he said, was Jupiter himself, and badd my lady be of good cheare, and tould her this boy was his.

A. Is this possible? Were it soe, I should hould yt no dis-

grace to haue Jupiter my copartner. Well, Bromia, goe in and I will followe the.—But whoe lyes here as if he were dead? Out of doubt tys Dromio. Howe came he hither? 110 I will raise him.—Sirra, Dromio!

D. Oh, oh, oh!

A. What, Dromio!

D. What shalbe come of me nowe?

A. Why, Dromio, I saie arise, man.

D. An you be a godd of your handes spare my lief and take that that I haue.

A. I maruell not to see this villeine soe much affraied when I my-self even now was in the lyke case. What, Dromio, I saie, tis I. 120

D. An yt be, sir, thats all one. I haue not great hast to heauen yet an yt please you to let me alone. I am as well here.

A. Whie, tis I, man, thy maister.

D. I knowe you are maister, sir, to better men then I am, yet had I as liue not serue you at this time.

A. What an asse is this to feare when there is no cause. I tell the tis I, thy maister, Amphitruo.

D. An you haue my maister Amphitruo, sir, you may the better spare me. 130

A. 'Have him,' quoth he; I tell the I am he.

D. It may be soe sir, but how shall a man knowe that?

A. Whie loke upon me, man.

D. I, I thought soe; now ones eyes are smytten out of his heade with a thunderboulte, you would haue me looke upon you.

A. Whie, I warrant the, doe but looke upp.

D. You are sure, Sir, you se no more thunder sturring?

A. I warrant the.

D. Well, I will venture: giue me your hand. Can a man tell 140 whither I see or no? Let me see; doe I see, or am I ouerseene? By this 'Light, I see indeed; who would haue thought yt? O maister, where haue you bene all this while? Are you here still?

A. Whie, where should I be els?

D. 'Where,' quoth he; by heauen, I thought you hadd bene in heauen, I.

- A. I praie the, howe should I come thither?
- D. I doe not meane you should haue gone thither, but that
 150 yt should haue come to you. Why, whoe would not haue
 thought but heauen and earth by this time had come
 together?
- A. Thou seest I am here yet.
- D. I, and am gladd to see yt to, I maie tell you, for I nere
 thought to haue seene yt with these eyes againe. But
 maister, wott you what, I haue hadd the strangest dreame
 I thinke that euer you hard.
- A. Whye, what was that?
- D. That yt should raine soe longe till our house were of a
 160 light fyre, and then my mistres should be deliuered, god
 blesse us, of twoe boyes and twoe serpentes, and one of
 the serpentes should kill the twoe boyes, and one of the
 boyes should kill the twoe serpentes.
- A. This is a strange dreame indeed.
 (The soft musick with the song therin by Jupiter.)¹
- D. O harke, maister, more thunder, more thunder! In,
 and you loue your-self!
 (Audiatur quasi incipiens musica, vel buccinarum, vel organo-
 rum, de coelo histrioni[c]o.)

SCENA II

JUPITER

AMPHITRUO

- J. Amphitruo!
- A. This voyce is from heauen; I must doe reuerence.
 (Iterum sonet musica coelestis aliquod interstitium.
 Procumbit in faciem Amphitruo.)

SCEN III

JUPITER SOLUS

Amphitruo, feare not, but take thy wief againe. The
 boyes she is deliuered of, one of them was begotten by the,
 the other by me: **Whome I wyll haue called Hercules.**

(hic chorus audiatur cantans quasi de coelo, ultima verba Jovis)

¹(. . . .) written in a different hand.

†SCEN IIII

JUPITER SOLUS

Amphitruo, the confusion of thy house was wrought by me for my owne pleasure. In recompense wherof I haue giuen the **A Sonne that shall crowne thy mortall beade Wyth Immortalitye.**

(hoc etiam decantet chorus)

SCEN V

JUPITER

AMPHITRUO

- J. Amphitruo, be freindes, therefore, with Alcumena, for she is true, and nere toucht man but thou.

And soe be happie Alcumena, be happie Amphitruo.

(hoc denique decantet chorus)

- A. All rulinge Jupiter, yt shalbe as thou comandest.
(finito chorus)

(Postremo audiatur prima illa coelestis musica, ita ut sonus paulatim ascendere videatur)

~~Testamentum~~~~poetae ad pelem~~~~Comoediarum pariter & histrionum~~~~princeps Pelen tuo pro iudicio, volo~~~~hanc notam Comoediam, vel recitari,~~~~vel reticere: hoc est: aut vivere, aut~~~~mori.~~~~Scripti, nec poeta, nec~~~~moriens: & tamen poeta moriens.¹~~

† Fol. 32 b

¹ These lines appear in the original MS. crossed out as indicated.

NOTES

The manuscript of the play is in the British Museum (*Add.* 28722). Regarding the author I have been able to discover nothing, nor does it seem possible to fix the exact date of composition. Manuscript experts of the British Museum conjecture from the hand and from the paper that the manuscript belongs to the period between the years 1610 and 1620,—that it has “altogether a seventeenth century look.”

But we have good reason for believing that the play belongs to a period slightly antecedent to 1610. By an act of Parliament 3 James I chap. 21, “an Act to restrain the abuses of Players,” it is provided that “for the preventing and avoiding of the great abuse of the holy Name of God in Stage-playes,” etc., a fine of ten pounds shall be imposed upon any person who “shall in any Stage-play, Enterlude, Sew [shew], May-game, or Pageant, jestingly or prophanely speak, or use the Name of God or of Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, or of the Trinity. . . .” It was in accordance with the provisions of this act, as is well known, that many of the freer expressions in the earlier Shakspeare quartos were modified in the first folio. It would seem highly probable, then, that we may assign the play to the period between 1600 and 1606. Hazlitt in his *Collector's Manual* gives as the date of composition “about 1590,” but this would seem to be a mere conjecture. The line in the *Prologus Laureatus* which states that

Thepilogue is in fashion, prologues no more,

seems to furnish us with a clue, but when we attempt to follow its leading it proves of little service. References to contemporary practice in the matter of prologues and epilogues occur occasionally in Elizabethan plays. Compare, for example, the epilogue to *As You Like it*. The Prologue to *The Woman Hater* by Beaumont and Fletcher (1607) begins as follows: “Gentlemen, Inductions are out of date, and a Prologue in verse is as stale as a black velvet cloak and a bay garland: therefore you shall have it in plain prose, thus.” A similar reference, though specifically made with regard to the apologetic prologue to a mask, occurs in *Romeo and Juliet* I. iv. 3 (1594-96?), where Benvolio declares that “the date is out of such prolixity.” The fact that the date of composition of many of the plays which were written in the early part of the seventeenth century can not now be determined accurately makes the question more difficult, but if we take the works of Heywood, Chapman, Shakspeare, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher alone, we find it almost impossible to say that at any time during the last decade of the sixteenth, or the first thirty years of the seventeenth century the epilogue was particularly popular or the prologue falling into disuse. The probability would seem to be that the reference is of a very local character.

The suggestion presents itself that possibly *The Birthe of Hercules*

is one of the plays which were Englished by W. W., the translator of the *Menaechmi*. A comparison of the play, however, with the single work of this author which has come down to us, gives no reason for accepting the theory of identity of authorship. General technique, the method of treating the original, the language used in the English versions—none of these show any real similarity.

RELATION OF *The Birthe of Hercules* TO THE *Amphitruo*

The Birthe of Hercules is a translation, now free, now rather close, of the *Amphitruo* of Plautus; nearly one-third of the English play, however, is entirely original. A detailed comparison of the dramas will make their relation to each other more apparent.

The Birthe of Hercules is preceded by a *Prologus Laureatus* of fifty-six lines which opens with an excuse for itself. The origin of the play is then declared, as well as its popularity in ancient times. The criticism of those who "for addinge to yt and alteringe yt must be offended" is forestalled by citing the custom of Plautus and Terence in dealing with their Greek originals. The objection of those who "will condempne as unfyttinge heathen mouth the use of Christian asseueracions" is also considered and dismissed lightly, for "our poet looks not to doe more then Joue himself, who, raine he or hould he up, pleases not all." This prologue is of course entirely original with the English author.

The acrostic argument is omitted and next follows *Mercurius Prologus*, corresponding to the prologue of the *Amphitruo* which, however, has been much shortened. The greater part of Mercury's speech in the *Amphitruo*, in which he announces himself as the messenger of his father, Jupiter, and entreats silence, is omitted. So, too, is his juggling with the question as to whether the play shall be a tragedy or comedy, his orders to the *conquisitores* to take measures against those who may have been suborned to applaud individual actors, and his threats against the Aediles if they do not perform honestly their duty as judges. To the latter part, in which Mercury sets forth the subject of the play, the English *prologus* bears in most places a general resemblance. The chief departure of *The Birthe of Hercules* from its original, however, is here indicated. Whereas in the *Amphitruo* the general sends only his servant Sosia as a messenger, the plot is complicated in *The Birthe of Hercules* by sending "after him another for faile." Only in one or two instances do we find literal translation, e.g.:

The place where we now are is Thebes,
This is Amphitruo his house,
A great lord of this countrie.

Haec urbs est Thebae: in illisce habitat aedibus Amphitruo, natus Argis ex Argo patre. (ll. 97-8.)

and again:

But that you may know us asunder I will were in my hatt a peice of a fether for a difference.

*Nunc internosse ut nos possitis facilius
Ego has habedo usque in petaso pinnulas.* (ll. 142-43.)

Practically the same information is given in the two prologues, but

unimportant omissions, additions, and modifications are made throughout.

At the end of this prologue, and on the same folio stands the list of *dramatis personae*: in Plautus it precedes the acrostic argument. The order is slightly different in the English play, which has the one added character—*Dromio alter Ser. Amphyt.*

The elaborate stage directions of *The Birthe of Hercules* are, of course, original with its author. Throughout Act I, Sc. i, we have a fairly close correspondence. Frequently the translation is almost literal, though slight departures from the original occur everywhere. For instance, the references to Dromio and Thessala, as also the rather pathetic attempt at witticism suggested by the expression "bridle that tounge of youres," are additions. In the passage where Mercury announces that his cudgel has put four men to sleep, and Sosia fears that his name may be changed to Quintus, the English author has found it more convenient to juggle with the numbers nine and ten. In Plautus the seal is simply *cum quadrigis Sol exoriens*; in *The Birthe of Hercules* this is expanded to "The Sonne rysinge drawn in an azure coach with foure flame colored horses." But except such slight departures—and they are rather numerous—the correspondence is close.

Sc. ii, in which Mercury in a monologue announces the approach of Dromio, and Sc. iii, in which he imposes on the latter by playing the rôle of Sosia, are additions entirely. On the other hand Sc. ii of the *Amphitruo*, in which Mercury *solus* tells the audience how Jupiter will finally free Alcmena from suspicion, is entirely omitted. Sc. iv of *The Birthe of Hercules* follows Sc. iii of the *Amphitruo* rather closely, and includes Sc. iv—Jupiter's address to night.

Act II, Sc. i, a dialogue between Alcmena and Thessala, is an addition. Alcmena's first speech corresponds to her monologue at the beginning of Sc. ii of the *Amphitruo*, but only in a general way, for in the latter she is reconciled to her husband's absence because *Virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto . . . Virtus omnia in sese habet*; in *The Birthe of Hercules* we have one long complaint regarding woman's lot, in which Thessala joins warmly.

Sc. ii, in which Sosia relates to his master his wonderful experience, and his doubts as to his own identity, corresponds closely to Sc. i of the *Amphitruo*.

Sc. iii, the meeting of Alcmena and Amphytrion, follows the general progress of Sc. ii of the *Amphitruo*, but with some changes. Alcmena's opening soliloquy about Penelope and her weaving is substituted for the reflections on the general unhappiness of woman's lot which have been made use of in the first scene. Thessala is a character; in Plautus she is present, but merely for the purpose of executing the command of her mistress to bring in the casket. We have also an added reference to another servant, for when Alcmena sends Thessala on her errand she adds: "Bid Ragazzo come too." Amphytrion accuses his wife of having gained her information about his success in battle from Dromio.

Act III, Sc. i—Jupiter *solus*—follows closely Sc. i of the *Amphitruo*. Jupiter's references to Juno are both additions. Sc. ii corresponds to Sc. ii of the *Amphitruo*. The only difference here is in the *motif* of the reconciliation. In the *Amphitruo* Alcmena yields to her supposed husband's entreaties; in *The Birthe of Hercules* she yields only after he has taken her refusal as final, and has announced that he will leave Thebes forever, upon which she rejoins:

The goddes forbid that for my sake you should wronge your countrie soe much.

Sc. iii corresponds to Scs. iii and iv¹ of the *Amphitruo*, but only in the most general way. Alcmena upbraids Sosia for his past conduct, whereas in Plautus, Jupiter merely tells Sosia that a reconciliation has taken place. The latter part of the scene is a monologue in which Jupiter explains how he will have Amphytrion prevented from entering his own house,—and that by the agency of Dromio; in Plautus Jupiter addresses Mercury—*tu divine Sosia*—directly, and orders him to refuse ingress to Amphytrion.

Sc. iv is a long dialogue between Jupiter and Dromio and, of course, is in its entirety an addition.

Sc. v Mercury *solus*. This is a much modified version of Act IV, Sc. i, of the *Amphitruo*.² Mercury explains how he and Dromio will keep Amphytrion out. In the *Amphitruo* Mercury indulges in some swaggering declarations of his divinity, and explains to us how dutiful a son he is,—all of which is omitted in *The Birthe of Hercules*.

Act IV, Sc. i, corresponds in general to Scs. ii and iii³ of the *Amphitruo*, but the whole is greatly lengthened and the plot much complicated by the fact that Dromio plays an important part here.

Sc. ii. The opening speech corresponds to the last speech of Sc. iii in Plautus. The rest follows Sc. iv of Plautus with numerous changes. For example, Amphytrion's monologue is much shortened by the omission of the mythological details.

Sc. iii follows Scs. v and vi of Plautus rather closely. Amphytrion's bitter protest: "But I am Amphitruo, the miserable. Sir, you shall not take this from me," etc., is an addition. The concluding speech by Amphytrion is much expanded, and does not follow the last part of the corresponding speech in Plautus.

Act V, Sc. i, is an almost literal translation of Sc. i of the *Amphitruo*, only a few unimportant changes being introduced. The chief of these is the omission of the first two sentences of Bromia's speech. The latter part of the scene, however,—the dialogue between Amphytrion and Dromio is, of course, an addition.

Scs. ii, iii, iv, and v—Jupiter's explanation—correspond to Sc. ii of the *Amphitruo*—not a word-for-word translation, however

¹ The Teubner text does not divide Scs. iii and iv of Plautus.

² The Teubner text gives only one short scene—the final one between Blepharo and Amphytrion—to Act IV, but the division of Echard and Thornton here followed seems the more logical.

³ Here at line 1035 begins the part which many scholars believe not to have been written by Plautus.

We may now sum up the results of the above analysis. Nearly one-third of the English play is quite independent of Plautus, to such an extent has the author made use of the idea of introducing a second servant—Dromio. But in no sense has this important change modified the general conception of characters or plot. Here we have substantially perfect correspondence, and the order of development is rigidly adhered to. In many places, as we have noted, it is a case of almost literal translation, though ordinarily the author has not hesitated to curtail, expand, or alter his original to suit his own purpose. As compared to Plautus, he is much more interested in the elaboration of a comic situation than in the development of the plot, and his successive expansions and curtailings have usually been in accordance with this predilection, which carries in itself the explanation of his insertion of the rôle played by Dromio. The genuinely diverting character of the play is the all-sufficient justification of the English author's departure from his original. As to the greater improbability which is thus introduced, we may accept here Schlegel's defence of Shakspeare's similar procedure in his *Comedy of Errors*: "When once we have lent ourselves to the first, which certainly borders on the incredible, we should not probably be disposed to cavil about the second; and if the spectator is to be entertained with mere perplexities they cannot be too much varied."

Page 99: line 13. *Clapt by Consulls and emperors*. "Now so highlie were comedies esteemed in those dales that men of great honor and grave account were the Actors, the Senate and the Counsuls continuallie present, as auditors at all such sports. . . ." *Francesca's Fortunes*, or the Second Part of Greene's *Never too Late*, ed. Grosart, Vol. VIII, p. 131.

99: 18. *Borras tale*. "Probably a form of 'Borrel'—rude or clownish. From *burellus*, coarse cloth; in which sense *borrel* is also used by Chaucer."—NARES. The word is also written *borel* or *burel*. Cf.

"But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man."—*Canterbury Tales*. F. 716.

i.e., rough or unlettered.

99: 22. *Inkhorne wordes*. "To use inkhorn terms, i.e., to write affectedly and use fine language."—HALLIWELL. The term was in very common use.

Men, that removed from their inkehorne termes
Bring forth no action worthe of their bread.

Summer's Last Will and Testament, NASH'S Works
ed. Grosart Vol. VI, p. 146.

99: 26. *Bycause ould thinges are stale*. Cf.

"Alonso of Aragon was wont to say in commendation of age, that age appears to be best in four things,—old wood best to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to trust, and old authors to read."—BACON, *Apothegms*. No. 97.

99: 32. *Grandame Jone and Grandsire John*. In *The Trial of Treasure* (DODSLEY III, p. 276), Inclination the Vice says:

Now, by my halldom, it is alone a :
Better sport in my life I never saw,
It is trim I tell you to dance with John and Jone a,
We pass not a point for God and his law.

In Ulpian Fulwell's *Like will to Like* (DODSLEY III, p. 317), the Vice addresses someone in the audience as "Jone with the long snout," and

again (p. 332) as "gentle Jone." "John-and-Joan" was the cant phrase for an hermaphrodite.

100: 34. *A translated sute*, i.e., they like an imported suit of clothes but not a foreign play.

100: 51. *Joue himself, who, raine he or hould he up, pleases not all.* Cf. the following passage from Erasmus's Colloquies (Trans. by N. Bailey, Reeves and Turner, London, 1878): "For you know that saying of Theocritus that was as truly as it was wittily said *Jovem nec pluvium nec serenum placere omnibus*; That Jupiter does not please all Men either when he sends Rain or fair Weather," Vol. II, p. 256 The quotation is not from Theocritus but from Theognis, 25-26. He is saying that he can not hope to please everybody—"For not even Zeus pleases all whether he gives or holds back the rain."

οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ Ζεὺς
οὐθ' ἔων πάντες' ἀν δάψει οὐτ'
ἀρέχων.

and again he says in line 803: "Not even Zeus, the son of Kronos, who rules over mortals and immortals, can please all men."

101: 1. *You would thinke yt were daie*, etc. Plays ordinarily began about three o'clock in the afternoon.

101: 15. *One of the maddest pranks.* The hero of *Jack Juggler* characterizes that play in similar terms:

And now, if all things happen right,
You shall see as mad a pastime this night,
As you saw this seven years.—DODSLEY, II, p. 113.

101: 23. *Teleboians.* "Taphiae Insulae—a number of small islands in the Ionian Sea, lying between the coasts of Leucadia and Acarnania. They were also called the islands of the Teleboae, and their inhabitants were in like manner named Taphii or Teleboae."—*Smith's Classical Dictionary*.

102: 39, 42. *For faile; for disturbing.* "For" is used in the sense of "for fear of" or "to prevent." The usage is common in Chaucer, Shakspeare, and many early authors. Cf.

He yet lies with his mother for catching cold.

Mother Bombie, LYLY'S Works, ed. Fairholt, Vol. II, p. 81.

OR

He wolde the see were kept for anything. . . .

CHAUCER, *Prologue*, l. 276.

103: 10. *What skilt you? What does it concern you? What business is it of yours?* Cf.

Let them sit still: it skills them not what chance come on the dice.

Complaint of the absence of her lover being on the sea, SURREY.

103: 17. *A knavish skonce.* "Skonce" means "head," or "skull." One, Onaphets, had broken his knave's skonce.

Damon and Pithias (DODSLEY, Vol. IV, p. 65).

Here it is used rather in the sense of "wit," "disposition." Cf.

Laudo ingenium. I like thy skonce.

Mother Bombie, LYLY'S Works, Vol. II, p. 90.

104: 31. *Well Countenanced*. Handsome, good-looking. The word "countenanced" was used to denote a portrait. This is an example of the adjective in -ed; cf. the appendix to Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon* for examples.

106: 120. *Interteine a man of free cost at the signe of the Cudgell*. Cf. the possibly similar expression, "Jack Drum's entertainment," *The Three Ladies of London* (DODSLEY VI, p. 324); "John Drum's entertainment"—*All's Well That Ends Well* (Act III, Sc. vi). A third variation of the name is given in Holinshed—"Tom Drum, his entertainment, which is to hole a man by the head and thrust him out by both the shoulders." Cf. also, "Are you disposed to eat any fist-meat?"—*Jack Juggler*, Grosart ed., p. 47.

107: 144. *Tis a Cudgell for the nonce*, i.e., "just right"; "exactly suited to the occasion."

107: 158. *At a venture*, i.e., at random, as in Shakspeare or the King James version of the Bible. The use in the present connection seems a little peculiar.

107: 169. *A monstrous euill takinge*, i.e., predicament.

Look ye, sirrah, where your fellow lies;
He's in a fine taking, is he not?

The Two Angry Women of Abington, DODSLEY, Vol. VII, p. 206.

What a taking was he in when your husband asked who was in the basket.

The Merry Wives of Windsor III. iii. 191.

We are all in sad taking with influenza.

FROUDE, *Jane Welsh Carlyle*, Vol. I, p. 49.

108: 178. *Horne an you will, but lanterne in your face*. Sosia seems to be attempting a pun on the word "lanthorn,"—"a popular spelling simulating horn, in supposed allusion to the transparent plates of horn which often formed the sides of lanterns."—*Century Dict.*

108: 187. *Bridle that tounge*, etc. Similar naïve wit, introducing the "horse," "ass," and the expression "to bridle the tongue," is to be found in *The Trial of Treasure*, DODSLEY, Vol. III, pp. 278-280.

109: 229. *I will giue you a bombastinge*, i.e., a beating.

I will so codel and bombaste thee as thou shalte not be able to sturre thyselfe.

Palace of Pleasure, Vol. I, p. 151.

110: 253. *Would you were els for me*. An interesting example of this peculiar Elizabethan use of "els." Similarly used on page 125,—*"Would I were els for my owne sake."*

110: 259. *Stockfish*. Sosia refers to the manner in which he has been cudgelled. Beating was part of the process of curing stockfish, a name which is applied to several kinds of fish, hard-dried and without salt. The word is used a number of times by Shakspeare and Jonson.

I'll turn my mercy out o' doors and make a stock-fish of thee.

Tempest III. ii. 79.

Slight, peace! thou wilt be beaten like a stock-fish.

Every Man in His Humour, III, ii.

110: 263. *I would not haue said Sosia; I would haue said 'Soe as you saie.'* Sosia's pun is at least worthy of its Latin original. Cf.

Me. Amphitruonis te esse alebas Sosiam. So. Pecaueram: 'Amphitruonis socium' neme esse volui dicere.

113: 6. *A kind of Bassiter*, i.e., ambassador. Dromio may also be attempting a punning reference to the game "Ambassador"—"a trick to duck some ignorant fellow or landsman, frequently played on board ship in the warm latitudes."—BRAND, *Popular Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 391.

114: 13. *The backe-tricke*. A kind of dance. Cf.

I think I have the back-trick simply as strong as any man in Illyria.—*Twelfth Night* I. iii. 131.

114: 15. *The mayepole snikepace*. It is difficult to tell whether this is a form due to Dromio, or whether the relative positions of the "i" and "n" became accidentally changed in the manuscript. At any rate Sink-a-pace—a corruption of cinque-pace—is intended. Cinque-pace, see Nares S. V. There is possibly a quibble intended on the first part of the word. Cf.

Wooring, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque pace.—*Much Ado* II. i. 77.

114: 16. *The wheelinge galyard*. A whirling dance often referred to at this period. Cf. Jack Juggler's description of Alice Trip-and-Go: She quavereth and warbleth like one in a galliard.

114: 20. *The Amonde leape*. "Amonde" or "Almond" is a form of the word "Almain," i.e., German. "Almain" is the more common spelling in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. V. "Almain" in *New English Dictionary*:—B (substantive) 2. A kind of dance. . . . 1611, Cotgrave, S. V. *Saut, Trois pas I un saut*, "The Almond leape."

114: Note. *The Somersetshire trick*, i.e., to turn a somersault.

114: 36. With Dromio's description of the vessel's reaching even to the "ferment," so that the mast might have made a hole in it, compare the Clown's speech in *The Winter's Tale* III.iii:

Now the ship boring the moon with her main-mast, and anon swallowed with yest and froth.

114: 42. *Unestable*. A Gobboism for "detestable."

114: 44. *I wold willinglie have groune to exposicion*, etc., apparently means, "I would willingly have made terms with," etc.

115: 57. *Are the 9 planettes*, etc. Cf. the telling of time by the position of Charles's Wain in *1 Henry IV*, II.i. Dromio has confused the number of the planets and muses. Perhaps the latter were suggested by "the seven sisters," i.e., the Pleiades.

115: 85. *Knuckle deepe*. Cf. "Knuckle deep in fat."—*Mucedorus* (DODSLEY, Vol. VII, p. 240). "Knuckle deep in dirt."—*The Two Angry Women* (DODSLEY, Vol. VII, p. 356).

116: 91. *A made man*. Cf. "We had all been made men" (*Midsummer Night's Dream* IV. ii.17), i.e., our fortunes would have been established.

116: 110. *I am vildly affraid*. "Vild" and "vile" are different forms of the same word. Cf. "vild disdain"; "O that vild Usury!" etc.

118: 174. *Parenter I, parenter no*. "Parenter" and "paraunter" are the same as "peraunter"—for "peradventure"—"perhaps."

118: 186. *A plaine baie or a sheepes russett*. "Bay" and "sheep's

russet" were about the same color—reddish or brownish red. Cf. "Here is a good sheep's russet sea-gowne, will hide more stresse, I warrant you than two of his."—*The True Chronicle History of King Leir* (HAZLITT'S *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. VI, p. 367. Also "Grigietto, a fine graie or sheepes russet."—FLORIO, *Worlds of Wordes* (1598).

123. Compare with this conversation between Alcumena and Thes-sala the opening scene of the *Stichus*.

124: 59. *Honour . . . is but a shadowe.* The speech suggests Falstaff's famous soliloquy, *1 Henry IV*, V.i.

126: 47. *Flapp me in the teeth.* A common expression of the time. Cf.

Rascall dost flappe me in the mouth with tailer
And tell'st thou me of haberdasher's Ware?

ROWLANDS, *Knave of Hearts* (1613).

130: 89. *And 'take, i. e., an[d] it take—if it take.*

131: 120. *This night, i. e., "last night."* Cf. "I did dream . . . to-night."—*Merchant of Venice* II.v.18.

131: 132. *Controule*—Used in the rare sense of "to have superior force or authority over."—*Century Dict.*

135: 268. *My Lo, i. e., My Lord.* Cf. "I have attayned to please those I seeke if I please your La" (Ladyship).—*Retrospective Review*, Vol. II, p. 153 (cir. 1572).

138: 10. *To haue her bloud attempted, i. e., to have an attack made on her life.*

139: 67. *Well, Ladye, this is once, etc., i. e., Let us be definite about it since we wish to understand each other's position clearly.*

139: 68. *Out of hand, directly, without delay.* "Gather we our forces out of hand."—*1 Henry VI*, III. ii.

140: 1. *You tooke me even in my caste sir.* "To speak in a man's cast" means "to speak during his part; to interrupt." N.E.D. Cast. sb. 26b. Cf.

If I may speak in your cast, quoth Issida.—LYLY, *Euphues*.

141: 30. *With a tryce*—an older form of "in a trice."

144: 117. *Capperclawe, or caperclaw, or clapperclaw*—"to beat, claw, and scratch." Cf.

He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

The Merry Wives of Windsor II. iii. 67.

145: 136. *Ouerseene, i. e., deceived* (Obsolete). Cf. "overshoot."

145: 159. *Thou shalt—thou shalt.* Possibly a scribe's unintentional repetition.

147: 20. *I maruell what time of daie tis with him.* "Time of daie," is here used as a slang phrase denoting "the latest aspect of affairs."—*Century Dict.*

148: 58. *These high Countries, i. e., of course on the roof.*

148: 59. *Thou art ould suersby.* Possibly a reference to Sym Suresby of *Ralph Roister Doister*

149: 72. *Forfeyture.* Dromio probably means "feature," or possibly "counterfeit," i. e., likeness.

149: 80. *In good time, sir.* Evidently in about the same sense as the Elizabethan "Anon, Sir." Cf. "in good time" (*Romeo and Juliet* I. ii. 47); "in happy time" (*Romeo and Juliet* iii. 5), and the French phrase, *à la bonne heure*.

149: 84. *By and by*, i.e., presently.

149: 85. *An you get you not awaie the soner.* Cf. also (p. 150). . . *if thou doest not spitt yt out the soner.* The meaning is evident, and similar expressions seem to have been fairly common. Cf. "Go not my horse the better" (*Macbeth* III.i.25). V. note to Clarendon Press edition of *Macbeth*.

149: 103. *An Incony place.* "A cant word prevalent about 1600 of unascertained origin" (N.E.D.). "Incony" means "rare," "fine," "pretty." Cf.

O superdainty canon, vicar incony.

BEN JONSON, *Tale of a Tub*, IV, 1.

149: 110. *Floute . . . in high dutch*, i.e., simply in German.

150: 119. *Ich bringe euch unudt.* The last word seems quite unintelligible.

150: 120. *Very good fustian.* "Fustian" is bombastic or inflated language. Cf.

God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian.

MARLOWE, *Doctor Faustus*, p. 85.

150: 139. *A phillipp on the coxcombe.* "A rap on the head." Cf.

Then sith man's life is as a glass, and a flip may crack it, etc.

Soliman and Perseda (DODSLEY, Vol. V, p. 346).

151: 155. *And soe forth.* Probably a direction to the actor to improvise. Such directions are not uncommon in Elizabethan plays.

153: 17. *Recoumpt* or *recompt*—obsolete forms of recount.

154: 46. *As good sone as signe*, i.e., you might as well go now as later. Cf. the expression "soon or syne," i.e., sooner or later. The expression is evidently proverbial.

155: 98. *Lawe.* A variation of the interjectional "La!"—now vulgar.

156: 4. *Reakes*, an old word for "pranks." "*To play rex*—to play the king; act despotically or with violence; handle a person roughly; "play the mischief." This phrase probably alludes to the *Rex*, or king, in the early English plays, a character marked by more or less violence. The noun in time lost its literal meaning, and was often spelled *reaks*, *reeks* (keep a *reaks*, etc.), and used as if meaning "tricks."—*Century Dict.* Cf.

To suffer such a caytiff to play such Rex.—SPENSER, *State of Ireland*.

Love with Rage kept such a reakes that I thought they would have gone mad together.—BRETON, *Dream of Strange Effects*, p. 17.

158: 80. *Pistolettes* [=G. *pistole*=Pg. *pistola*, <F. *pistole*, a pistole]. "The name was afterwards applied to the gold coins of other countries especially of Spain."—*Century Dict.* The value of the pistole of various countries varied from about \$3.45 to \$5.55.

"Pistolets,—S. diminutive of pistoles, a Spanish coin, not rounded, or formed with exactness."—NARES.

We offered some reward in pistolets unto the servant.

BACON, *New Atlantis* (works, Montagu ed., Vol. I, p. 256).

161: 17. *I verylie thought yt had bene on a light fier.* Cf. also, page 165. Ben Jonson uses the same expression: "Fasting days! What tell you me of fasting-days? 'Slid, would they were all on a light fire for me."—*Every Man in His Humour*, III, 2, p. 31, Gifford-Cunningham ed. An interesting persistence of the expression is in the Scotch phrase "a light low." V. *Guy Mannering*, p. 78, Centenary edition. Cf., also, "Oh, the house must be all in a light blaze inside!"—MARY E. WILKINS, *The Jamesons*, p. 9, N. Y., 1899.

162: 44. *My wief hath taken order with me for my wellfare.* The phrase "to take order" meant "to take suitable action or measures," "to provide for," and is now obsolete. Cf.

Provide me soldiers, lords,

Whiles I take order for mine own affairs.

2 *Henry VI*, III. 1. 320.

163: 80. *Choppinge*, stout, lusty, plump, bouncing.

How say you now, gossip

Is't not a chopping girl?

MIDDLETON, *Chaste Maid*, III, 5. (*Century Dict.*).

163: 88. *The base courte.* "A secondary or inferior court or yard, generally at the back of a house, opposed to the chief court or main quadrangle; a farm-yard."—*Century Dict.* Cf. the French *basse-cour*.

165. *de coelo histrioni[c]o*—i.e., the stage representation of heaven.

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